

70th Birthday Commemorative Edition

TOWNSEND TIMES

December 27, 1922 - March 31, 1992

\$1.00



Bicycles built for two...Townsend gents out for a bicycle ride on School Street, c. 1900.



Shave and a haircut two bits?...Will Cowdrey's Barber Shop, c. early 1900's.

The Townsend Times turns 70 years old

From its first publisher Charlie Johnson in 1922 to the present publishers, Frank and Gertrude Hartnett, the *Townsend Times* has enjoyed a rich and storied history publishing the news and social events of this strongly independent community. Charlie Johnson's first editorial on December 27, 1922 set the tenor for 70 years of news reporting: "Our purpose is to boom business for the merchants and businessmen of Townsend. We will endeavor to gather all the news that can be secured by the citizens, of the citizens, for the

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Townsend and its beginnings

As told by Sawtelle in 1878's 'The History of the Town of Townsend'

by Kate Walsh

Ithamar Bard Sawtelle was born in Brookline, N.H., on February 2, 1819 and died in Townsend on November 1, 1905. He was a noted antiquarian and authored several historical papers about his adopted home, as well as "The History of the Town of Townsend," published in 1878. "For more than half a century

after Groton and Dunstable were chartered, all this region at the western borders of these plantations, of which Townsend was a part, remained an unbroken wilderness. The most accessible lands on the coast of the province and along the fertile banks of the rivers were eagerly sought for by the puritans, while the rough and unpromising hills were unchosen and unoccupied by human beings. Even the Indians had no perma-

nent abode in this vicinity.... The red man laid no claim to lands in Townsend." (Ithamar B. Sawtelle)

The first paper title to land in Townsend was made in 1676, Sawtelle wrote. Conveyed to one William Hathorn was 640 acres of land "lying in the wilderness on the north of the Groton River at a place called by the Indians, Wistequassuck," meaning place of two pines.

The land, which came to be known as "Hathorn's Farm," was granted for "extra service" done by Hathorn in the interest of the Province.

"There is nothing of further interest to the town from 1676 to 1719...the deep silence of the wilderness remained unbroken by the sound of the emigrant's axe for more than forty years."

The foundation of this town's

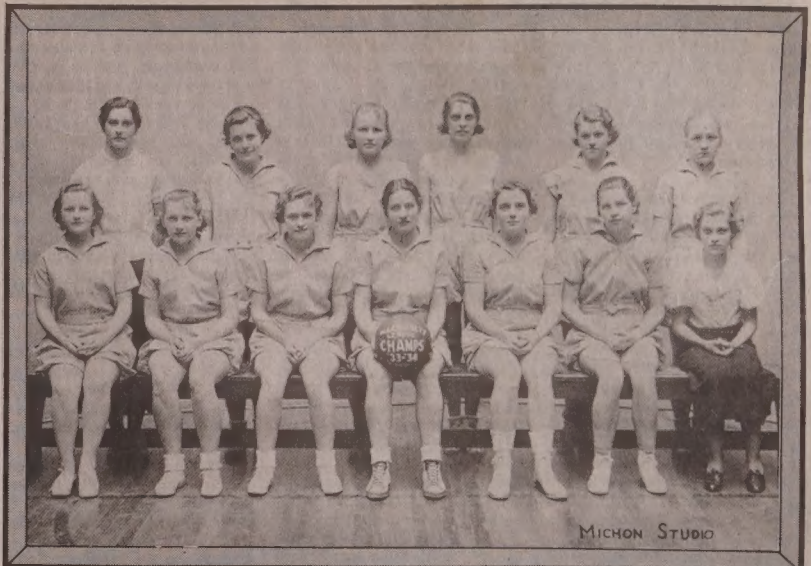
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Gertrude and Frank Hartnett Sr.



TOWNSEND HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL 1925-1926.



Wachusett League Champs...Townsend High Girls Basketball 1933-34.

Hoop memories echo from Spaulding gym

by John Margarita

It remains in darkness now, only a shell of its old self. Like an old ramshackle house that once vibrated with the sounds of children and families, the structure exists, but the life within, that

gave the structure its soul is gone.

Chunks of the ceiling have fallen on the hardwood floor and the hanging lights are smashed - victims of vandals.

At one time, however, the place shined, and area basketball fans packed its confines each winter to cheer the hoop stars of an era gone

by.

It was home to the Townsend High School basketball teams and it was where many a winter night was spent by local hoop fans.

The Spaulding Gymnasium, now a crumbling relic, was once the jewel of the area, hosting the famed Small Schools Basketball

Tournament each March, from the late 1930's to the mid-1950's.

Amidst the dust and darkness the echoes of yesteryear can still be heard... Robert Dik... Don Dik... Junie Marshall... Coach J. Verne Quimby... Coach Dick Roberts... Gloria Arsenaault... Bob Farrar... Jean Koski... Jim Dean

Malenfant...

Townsend High School basketball at one time was played at the Town Hall, when the high school was housed in what is now the Evans Clothing Building, but when the Spaulding School opened in 1932, Townsend had a gym that the Times described as "...

(had) ideal playing conditions offered in this spacious gymnasium."

Memorable battles took place on the Spaulding hardwood, Townsend scrapping in heated tilts against arch-rivals Lunenburg, Ashby and Pepperell. The

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Townsend in the Roaring Twenties

1922

December - Elvin "Johnny" King received the first copy of the *Townsend Times* on December 27, 1922. The paper chronicled happenings in the final weeks of 1922, at a cost of 3 cents.

Included was the story of Ernest Gustaf Adolph Isenback, Jr., a one time resident of the Park Hotel and employee of B. & A.D.

Fessenden Co. Isenback was declared guilty of attacking his jilted Beverly sweetheart three years prior, with the paternity of her three year old son finally established. Isenback was ordered to find a real job forthwith and to contribute no less than six dollars per week to the support of his son.

1923

January - Edward Murphy was found guilty of breaking into the Harbor Schoolhouse and stealing

a Victrola. He was sentenced to three months in the Cambridge House of Correction.

February - Selectman A. Dudley Bagley criticized the Overseers of the Poor for keeping a "balky" horse. He assigned the reason for their doing to the large sums of money being paid to one overseer for the use of his own team of horses. Candidates for the three one year terms as Selectmen

included J. Early Hughes for the Center, Edgar Campbell for the Harbor, and Oscar B. Mudgett for West Village.

March - At the 1923 Town Meeting, A. L. Leeman objected to the 93 cents out of every dollar spent on war and armament, while only a "bare fraction" was spent on education. His objections followed attempts to cut the school budget from \$30,500 to

\$28,000. A 16 year old young woman was arrested and charged with being a "stubborn child" after she refused to stop seeing her 22 year old boyfriend, who made a pest of himself, often calling her a dozen times a day. The young woman received a "sound" talking to from the judge.

April - Robert McNally and Marie Bent from Fitchburg were arrested at the Townsend Tavern and charged with violating the

"true name act." It was reported that they registered as Mr. and Mrs. Rowley of Boston. Attempts to escape by McNally resulted in his being taken away in handcuffs with the taxi driver who had brought the couple to the Tavern being chastised for transporting such people to Townsend. Fitchburg Gas & Election Light Co. was advertising the easy vacuum washing machine, which could

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TOWNSEND TIMES

70 Years Serving Townsend

Publishers

1922 - 1923 - Charlie Johnson
 1923 - 1930 - A. L. Leeman
 1930 - 1937 - Elbridge Cann - A. L. Leeman
 1937 - 1952 - Elbridge Cann
 1953 - 1956 - Wilfred Burgess - Cedric Chase
 1953 - 1956 - Bill Hastings - Charles Goodwin
 1956 - 1968 - Bill Hastings - Peg Hastings
 1968 - Present - Frank J. Hartnett - Gertrude Hartnett

"We will endeavor to gather all the news that can be secured by the citizens, of the citizens, for the citizens of Townsend."

- Charlie Johnson's first editorial, December 27, 1922

"We have a responsibility to our readers to keep them informed on the news pages and to guide them on the editorial page and stimulate their interest and obtain their ideas on matters of common support."

- Frank J. Hartnett, Sr.'s first editorial, April 18, 1968



Badge of courage...Civil War monument dedicated to Townsend resident Birney Blood in May 1932.

The Townsend Times turns 70 years old

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citizens of Townsend." Charlie Johnson's words still ring true in 1992.

The first issues of the *Times* were on white paper rather than newsprint, were small, only four columns wide and sold for just two cents. At this time there were 1,535 people living in Townsend and Charlie consistently gave them the old pep talk about trading locally. This newspaper has been more than just a chronicle of events, in many instances throughout the 70 years the *Times* has poked fun at its readers and indeed many residents of the town. Even today Blair Arsenault or Marilyn MacEachern are not safe from the slings and arrows of the *Times* editorial staff. Charlie Johnson started that tradition, for he was more than an adman and a collector of news items, he also wrote a couple of columns that tickled his audience and woke them up. One of these columns was headed "Why?" and Charlie asked such interesting questions as, why does a certain young man in town park his coupe numerous evenings each week in front of the telephone office?

The *Times* had changed quickly from its small first issues, had become a six column newspaper with four pages that sold for five cents, it was now printed on regular newsprint and carried more ads, many of which were taken by Ayer and Fitchburg stores. There were national ads and syndicated columns on food, philosophy and current events.

The 24th issue of the newspaper dated January 24, 1923 announced a change in ownership, as the *Times* was sold to A.L. Leeman of the Squannicook Printing Company. The paper was now printed in Townsend, on a flat bed press upstairs over F.J. Tenney's Brick Store. The paper grew at this time to six and sometimes ten pages, selling for three cents and began carrying Brookline, Ashby, Mason and Greenville news. The Leeman ownership represented rocky financial times for the newspaper.

Charlie Johnson was forced to reassume ownership for a period of time in 1925. The paper struggled through the remainder of that decade and then in January of 1930 Elbridge Cann joined Leeman as owner of the newspaper. Under Cann's influence the newspaper grew in stature, doubled in size and gave up the slogan on its masthead which said, "A good little weekly for a good little community." The newspaper still sold for just three cents, still carried local news of nine surrounding communities and still ran syndicated columns. The Leemans' influence ended abruptly in October of 1937 when Mr. Cann foreclosed on Leeman and took over sole ownership of the newspaper. This period under the Leemans represented one of only two times in the storied legacy of the *Times* that the future of the newspaper was in jeopardy.

In 1952 the 22 year reign of Mr. Cann ended with the sale of the newspaper and real estate to Wilfred Burgess and Cedric G. Chase Jr. Messrs. Burgess and Chase published for only 17 months and then illness forced them to give up the paper. This represented a critical juncture for the *Townsend Times*, as for the first time in its history the paper missed publication. But a week later it was in business again, having been taken over by two of its former personnel, William Hastings and Charles Goodwin. Then in 1956 Goodwin was bought out.

Bill Hastings and his wife Peg served as publishers for 15 years. In 1958 they erected a new one story cement block building at the junction of Jeffs Street and Riverbank Terrace. The *Times* flourished under the direction of the Hastings, reporting many important events in Townsend history. It was during these years that the North Middlesex School District was brought into being, in response to school overcrowding (sounds familiar). As for the working staff during that time, Bill Hastings did the editing and makeup, sold the ads and did most of the worrying. Peg Hastings

worked on the finances. Ellen Homoliski worked part-time, head linotypist was Robert Main, pressman and general assistant to Bill was Arthur Eaton. Ethel Johnson, wife of Charlie, still helped out (Charlie died in 1958).

On April 11, 1968 Bill and Peg Hastings wrote a front page editorial announcing the sale of the *Townsend Times* and *Pepperell Free Press* to Frank and Gertrude Hartnett of Pepperell. Thus began the modern era of the *Townsend Times*.

The Hartnett ownership, now in its 24th year, has brought many changes and improvements to the newspaper. The actual process used in producing the newspaper was changed by the Hartnetts from letterpress to the revolutionary offset method. This change was immediately evident in the outward appearance of the paper, better reproduction of type and photos. Frank Hartnett was committed early on to developing this newspaper into a regional news vehicle, it was this vision which eventually led to the award winning *Times Free Press/Public Spirit*. Just weeks after taking ownership the Hartnetts pushed into Lunenburg with a newspaper, the *Lunenburg Villager*. The Hartnetts at this time moved their offices from Jeffs Street in Townsend to Railroad Square in East Pepperell. Soon after papers were started in Ayer (*The Junction*) and Groton (*The Villager*).

In a page one editorial on January 13, 1972 Hartnett announced a major change, the names *Townsend Times* and *Pepperell Free Press* would be combined into *Times/Free Press*. In retrospect this announcement of combining the names of the two mother newspapers forever changed the face of local news in the now rapidly growing Nashoba Valley. The move was made in response to the changing times, area communities were facing many of the same problems, they were looking at many of the same solutions. The world was becoming smaller as the *Times Free Press* became larger. In 1975 Hartnett was awarded the contract

to publish the *Fort Devens Dispatch*, the command information newspaper on the Army base in Ayer, Harvard and Shirley. Hartnett still holds that contract today.

On September 16, 1976 a front page editorial informed readers of a major change in format for the *Times Free Press*, the newspaper would now be a tabloid, with an enlarged area of six columns by thirteen inches. In the late 1970's the newspaper published a weekly year long series of articles by noted Townsend Historian Richard Smith, "Divinity and Dust." Smith, a graduate of North Middlesex High School, authored many books including a best seller about Harry Truman's life.

Frank and Gert Hartnett in January of 1984 ended years of bitter competition with the rival *Public Spirit* newspaper, headquartered in Ayer with the purchase of that operation. At this time Frank Hartnett, Jr., who had been in the newspaper sales department for five years, was named President of the company, and Editor of the newspaper. Also Frank and Gert's other son Michael, a certified public accountant, joined the business and was named Chief Financial Officer. The final family link occurred in 1980 when Cathy Hartnett came on board as Director of Sales. Frank Hartnett Sr. remained as Publisher with redirected attention toward erecting new facilities for the rapidly expanding newspaper business and preparations for the purchase of a printing press.

In 1986 the company moved into a new 10,000 square foot building on Route 2A in Ayer. This building was expanded an additional 10,000 square feet in 1988 to house a new seven unit Web Leader Offset Printing Press. The company has since become one of the larger commercial print businesses in central Massachusetts.

The award winning *Times Free Press/Public Spirit* serves today as the flagship for the family of Hartnett newspapers. Now split into two editions, the Northern

Middlesex serving the towns of Pepperell, Groton, Townsend and Ashby, the Nashoba Valley serving Ayer, Shirley, Littleton, Har-

vard and Lunenburg.

Seventy years after its birth the *Townsend Times* is still the newspaper of record in Townsend.



Stagecoach stop...This Tavern built by Moses Warren in 1799 as a stagecoach stop on Turnpike Road was later known as the Central House. It was torn down in 1959 and a small cape stands on the spot today, on the corner of Turnpike Road and Squannicook Terrace.



The Park Hotel...Located on the corner of Main and Brookline streets, the Park Hotel was built ca. 1831.

Catherine Wilson remembers the Times

I saved your announcement of celebrating seventy years, planning to write later. "Later" is now!

My late husband, Ralph B. Wilson, often reminisced about his youth at Townsend Center. Included with the fact that Charlie Johnson put together his ideas for a local newspaper he would call "The Townsend Times." Ralph had a license and his parents had a car. Thus it was he who drove Charlie and his material to Ayer to the printing office for the first time. After that, whatever young driver was available, often Ralph, made the weekly trip to Ayer.

I guess it was pretty much a gossip sheet, but it sold.

Later, his wife Ethel told me she hadn't finished high school but she could spell so she became a linotypist at Turner Printing

Company, which, of course, is where Charlie met her.

Mr. Johnson, who took a correspondence course in journalism, had had polio when he was twelve and thereafter wore braces on his legs and walked with crutches. His sister, Lillian, used a wheelchair for the rest of her life.

Charlie was a "promoter" and got a number of things going in town. One was a men's club that met in the station after the railroad stopped using it.

Eventually Adelbert (A del'bert) Leeman was publishing the *Times*. He got equipment and did other printing jobs too. At one time he was located on the ground floor of the Park Hotel. His daughter, Gertrude (Leeman) Hale became a linotypist.

Later, when Elbridge Cann was

editor and printer, the paper was put out at the former Winchester Inn on Elm Street. Finally a new building appeared on Jeffs Street which was the new home of the *Times*.

I wish I could think of more constructive anecdotes about Charlie Johnson who must have been known by everyone in the town then, and was more remarkable than he was ever given credit for, except when someone organized "Charlie Johnson Appreciation Day," especially to raise the money to get him a new typewriter. Every organization supported the outing at Fessenden Field and he got the new machine so he could continue his news column which by then he was sending to the *Sentinel*.

Yours truly,

C.W. Wilson

This Ad Was Reprinted From
The Townsend Times 1941

1941

PONTIAC 'TORPEDOES'
3 NEW LINES...10 BEAUTIFUL MODELS

AND YOU CAN TAKE YOUR CHOICE
 OF A SIX OR EIGHT IN ANY MODEL

It's Another Big Year
 For Pontiac!



Center Pontiac Service
 Elm St., Townsend, Mass.

MAIN STREET GARAGE
 104 Main St., East Pepperell, Mass.

Townsend in the Roaring Twenties

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wash a family's laundry for a nickel.

May - News of the intentions of the Landry Loom Co. of Lowell to relocate to Townsend surfaced. The move was considered an "industrial boom" for the area with assurances received that needed labor would be taken from Townsend. A dance was given by the West Townsend Canoe Club and held at Memorial Hall. Admission was \$1.10 per couple.

June - A fire caused considerable destruction at the Fessenden Co. Chic Arlin discovered the blaze while at work in one of Fessenden's buildings where he saw a burning shingle drift by the window. Judge Carroll of Supreme Court ruled against the Moderator regarding a Special Town Meeting vote. A previous vote to form a committee to purchase land and make plans to build a school house, at a cost of \$60,000, was challenged with a majority voting to rescind the vote. The Moderator stated the vote to rescind was not valid since a two-thirds vote was required, but the court ruling negated his decision.

July - At West Village, wet roads caused an auto to skid and hit the wheel of a carriage driven by Mrs. Arthur O'Brien. Mrs. O'Brien was thrown from the carriage while the operator of the "machine" sped up and drove off. Another Special Town Meeting was held to discuss school overcrowding. A committee of six was elected to consider the issue. The Old Methodist Meetinghouse was struck twice by lightning, but without major loss. Copper plating on top of the spire was thought to have attracted the lightning.

August - Doctors were notified that previous state compensation for cows condemned due to tuberculosis, was no longer available. It was feared that the loss of payment, previously up to \$25, would result in farmers not coming forth with suspected tuberculous stock. The Board of Assessors set the tax rate for 1923 at \$28.30, computed on a total valuation of \$2,026,618. Total amount to be raised was \$57,853; with total bills at \$77,037. The balance was to be paid by state funding. Arthur Tracey's home on Dudley Road was lost to fire when he tripped over a threshold and dropped his lantern.

September - At the meeting of the Red Cross at the home of Mrs. Robert Copeland, arrangements were made to raise Townsend's quota of \$200 for the relief of Japan. At the Center school, 125 students enrolled in the high school, which was the largest enrollment on record. Five bridges on New Ipswich and Mason Roads were found to be unsafe by the Selectmen. Residents were requested to see for themselves since funds for repair would be requested at the next Town Meeting.

October - Approval was given at a Special Town Meeting for the construction of a two room school building, at a cost of \$5,000, to be located behind the Center school. With the new building set to receive 62 students schooled in the basement of Memorial Hall, objections were raised because the new building would not relieve overcrowding in the Center school. \$2700 was appropriated to repair bridges on Mason and Greenville Roads.

November - Four eight foot, 1200 gallon reproduction "sanitite" barrels were constructed by the Fessenden Cooperative Co. for the Eastern States Apple Show, to be held at the Grand Central Palace in New York City. Residents were informed of increased efforts in Boston to introduce legislation increasing the penalty for drunk driving - for those whose "appetite for booze was stronger than their fear of the penalty." Charles B. Hart, who died in Boston at the age of 78, made a generous bequest to the town of his birth. \$35,000 was donated for a Hart Free Library building and \$5,000 to the Congregational Church.

December - A fire at the Knowlton Farm, also known as the Brown Place, on Warren Road burned the building to the ground. The property, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Emil Wirtanen, caught fire when a lantern taken by Mrs. Wirtanen to the attic tipped and started a fast-moving blaze. E.E. Gray Co. opened a business in Townsend and advertised prices which included oranges for 29 cents per dozen, grapefruit at five cents each, and sliced bacon at 25



Roll out the barrel...Bob Hamilton operates a finishing machine at the Fessenden Co. The machine was used to coat the inside of barrels with paraffin (photo c. 1950).

cents per pound. Christmas services were celebrated at the Harbor Church, Congregational Church and Methodist Church.

1924
January - An addition to the Center School was completed at a cost of \$4500. The two room annex housed grades 1, 2 and 3, previously occupying the banquet room at Memorial Hall. A representative from the Interstate Commerce Commission reported the percentage of locomotives found defective had increased by 70 percent with accidents and deaths up 117 and 118 percent respectively. The cause was thought to be incompetent strike breakers who could not keep pace with the wear and tear on the equipment. Leading women in Middlesex County put pressure on the Middlesex County Extension Service to further develop home making projects for women such as canning and nutrition.

February - The Tom Mix feature, "Three Jumps Ahead," was shown at Sawyer's Movies in Memorial Hall. High School Principal John Bachelder was exonerated of assault and battery charges brought against him by the parents of a sixth grade student, whom he admitted striking twice after being provoked by the boy. The court stated it is the duty of parents to uphold teachers in maintaining discipline.

March - At the Town Meeting, the Tax Collector was put on a salary of \$500 and given an expense account as opposed to being put on commission as earlier considered. A call for street lights at the Harbor was defeated. A meeting held at the Middlesex County Extension Service discussed declining milk prices which were forcing farmers to reduce herds or, in some cases, leave the dairy business. New one-ton Ford steel body trucks were advertised at \$490.

April - A wild cat was killed in the Harbor after it was seen sitting on a stump. The 12 pound cat was shot and beaten with a gun. A \$5 bounty was collected. Townsend received 5000 trees from the Amherst State Nurseries to be set out in the Town Forest. The Townsend Grange, established on February 28, 1892, was the subject of a story chronicling the organization's first 10 years.

May - The death of Robert Tumber was announced when his car skidded from Vinton Pond Road and dropped 12 feet into a brook, trapping him beneath. A meeting of the Parent/Teacher Association stressed the need for a school nurse using a "propaganda" film to drive the point home. The high cost of living was attributed to misconduct in the United States Department of Justice in their refusal to stem price-fixing organizations.

June - Townsend paid homage to its war heroes in well attended Memorial Day observances. Charles O'Brien, age 21, was sitting at a table with his sister who was writing letters. Referring to the 32 caliber pistol lying between them on the table, she asked, "Does it shoot?" "Yes," replied O'Brien as he began to "jokingly" brandish the gun about his head. The gun went off and Charles O'Brien, 21, was dead. A "large class" of 24 was graduated from the high school in ceremonies at Memorial Hall. The Fessenden Co. was granted registration of their "Sanitite" Barrels trademark.

July - A community fireworks display was held at the West Townsend Bridge. In granting the contract for the construction of two bridges on the Lunenburg

Road over the river and canal, it was decided that two large elms must be sacrificed in order to straighten the roadway and "widen our congested highways" for the safety of the innocent pedestrian, not the reckless driver. The fiery cross of the Klu Klux Klan was seen on Bayberry Hill by passersby. Approximately 200 white hooded members were observed. Donations were requested to allow the continuation of Band Concerts for the year. The town had appropriated \$500, which was the limit allowed for a town of its size. Lawn parties were scheduled to raise the needed funds.

August - The Tax Rate for 1924 was set at \$25 per thousand, a reduction of \$3.30. An \$8000 surplus last year had led to the reduction. The Fessenden Store advertised school shoes for boys at \$1.98.

September - A committee was formed to locate historic sites in Townsend, to include the first church erected prior 1730, and the first school, built in or before 1749. The Anti-Saloon League hit town in their crusade to outlaw the manufacturing and transportation of liquor.

October - The Harbor Hose Co. held its annual minstrel show to raise money to finish and equip a chemical truck. The continuing overcrowding at the Center School resulted in the calling of a Special Town Meeting since the recently completed annex did not relieve the overcrowding. \$5200 was appropriated for a temporary two-room building. This vote was later rescinded at another STM which allowed children to continue being schooled in the basement of Memorial Hall. The voters decided let the Annual Town Meeting decide the issue of another addition. A rabid dog that bit four residents prompted the Selectmen to order all dogs muzzled or vaccinated against rabies. A successful 75th Anniversary Celebration was held at the Methodist Church.

November - 600 out of 732 registered voters turned out on election day, with 483 casting their votes for Coolidge and 67 voting for Davis. Moses Blood of

Townsend was pardoned after serving nine years of a life sentence for murder. The victim, W.M. Barnaby, was in love with Blood's sister at the time of the crime and objected vehemently to visitors to the Blood farm. Hearing of visitors on that day nine years ago, Barnaby went to the farm armed with an axe. As he attempted to beat the door down, Blood shot him in the mouth. The crime was later deemed manslaughter, resulting in a pardon.

December - President Coolidge called for economy in governmental expenditures though the federal budget stood at \$3,729,519,346.48.

1925
January - Spring cloudiness and cold were credited with the "only moderately" favorable crop season in 1924 Massachusetts. \$318.20 was funded by the Townsend Red Cross for the families who lost their belongings in a fire in the Funaiole Block.

February - Circulated publications opposing Child Labor Laws, reportedly from farmers' groups, turned out to be authored by cotton mill owners. Clement Noyes died in a tragic fire in the recently remodeled Fruit House at the Warren Hines Place on Townsend Hill. The Fruit House had been remodeled after the farm house burned. A town water supply was the primary topic on the Town Meeting warrant. The cost to provide a reliable water supply was estimated at \$210,000.

March - The Water Act was accepted at Town Meeting, but a date to proceed was not set. Town Meeting also authorized the appointment of a five man Finance Committee. The vote to fund a two-room school building failed and pay for firefighters was increased from \$10 to \$20 and pole tax, plus extra pay for fires over one hour in duration.

April - The Town Census showed a gain of 322 residents over the last census which totalled 1897.

May - A bonfire in the yard of the U.S. Adams Mill on Fitchburg Road resulted in a fire that destroyed the saw dust shed. The

proposed appropriation of funds to supply a town water system was defeated by a vote of 104 to 91, at a Special Town Meeting. A vote also approved continued use of the basement of Memorial Hall for school purposes. Opposition was raised to a free bus service, under the name Bill's Buses, to transport Townsend residents to Fitchburg businesses. The ride to Fitchburg was free while the return trip was 50 cents.

June - A petition for Bill's Buses was put before Townsend and Pepperell selectmen, seeking to operate a bus service between these communities and Fitchburg. The petition was approved in Pepperell but denied in Townsend. Townsend denial was due to consideration for a local jitney driver who was considering purchasing a bus. A "mad dog" was shot after the dog had bitten several other dogs. His head was sent to Boston for examination.

July - Another Special Town Meeting was scheduled to further discuss school overcrowding and sanitation problems at the Center School. Town Meeting voted to expend \$1775 to build space for sanitary facilities onto the School.

August - Over 800

automobiles, laden with passengers, attended the August 20 Band Concert, which netted \$407, insuring funding for the remaining concerts.

September - The library received a shipment of books in Finnish for the free use of Finnish residents. A good one horse wagon was advertised for sale by G.E. Peabody, while a Michigan merchant offered cash for false teeth and dental gold.

October - A 20 year old Townsend man shot and killed his father as the man tried to wrestle a 32 caliber revolver away from his son. The son, who was crippled from birth with a deformed leg, was said to be suffering from a "disordered mind." He was later judged to be insane and committed to Worcester State Hospital. Livestock were burned to death in a fire that destroyed the Funaiole home on Lunenburg Road. The selectmen granted Bill's Buses a license to provide Townsend-Fitchburg bus service. 25 cents was charged for a round trip and 10 cents between any in-town locations.

November - Reportedly cutting

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1915 TO 1940 EVERY YEAR FOR 25 YEARS more people have ridden on Goodyear Tires than on any other kind.

LEADERSHIP ANNIVERSARY SELL-EBRATION

Our Greatest July 4th
GOODYEAR TIRE SALE

ONLY 10 DAYS MORE

This Ad Was Reprinted From The Townsend Times 1942

FOR OUR GREAT MARATHON TIRE!

\$8.88 6.00-16 SIZE

WHEN BOUGHT IN SETS OF 4

OTHER SIZES PRICED IN PROPORTION. Cash prices with your old tires. White sidewalls slightly higher.

GOODYEAR'S GUARANTEE
LIFETIME THEY MAKE GOOD OR WE DO. Our Goodyear Tires are guaranteed in writing for their FULL LIFE, without time or mileage limits.

EASY EASY-PAY TERMS

75c A WEEK PER TIRE
5 to 10 Weeks to Pay

NEW ALL-AMERICAN TIRE
A great Goodyear value for the lowest price field.

NOW ONLY \$6.66 6.00-16 size
5.25 or 5.50-17 27.75 5.00-19 22.75 6.25 or 6.50-16 44.05 22.60 5.25 or 5.50-18 32.20 16.55

Cash prices with your old tire

GOODYEAR TIRES
Expert mounting at no extra charge! LOW COST... HIGH VALUE

Ormsby's Filling Station
JENNEY GASOLINE AND OILS
Townsend Center Telephone 11-W

1949 - 1992

Westside Package

366 Main Street, Townsend • 597-8391
(Rt. 119, Between W. Townsend and Townsend Center)

Full Lottery Agent • Beer, Wine and Liquor

Bob Tumber - Owner

1958-1992

The Settle Shop

419 & 422 Main Street
West Townsend, Massachusetts

Annex 597-2973 **Gifts 597-2313**

The Roaring Twenties

Continued from page 3

off her survivors without a cent, Amanda E. Dwight left her entire estate, totalling \$280,000, to public institutions and charities, announced the *Townsend Times*. A total estimated at \$90,000 was left to Townsend.

December - The Lunenburg Road home of Charles Levesque was totally destroyed in a fire thought to have been caused by an overheated stove. An overheated furnace caused a fire at the Center School which forced the school children to flee the building and assemble on the Common. A fire of unknown origin destroyed the Trotter Blacksmith Shop on Dudley Road. No telephone caused Trotter to run nearly as far as the center in his search for help. A fire threatened the Tenney Block, including the offices of the *Townsend Times*. The loss, estimated at \$200, was attributed to "spontaneous combustion or rats and matches."

1926
January - As the new year began, a Club Room for young men was a topic of discussion about town, "to keep unoccupied minds from planning mischief." Residents were requested to send in their thoughts on the matter.

February - Hearings began in the attempt of the heirs of Mrs. Amanda E. Dwight to break the will that left them nothing. Heirs claimed that the wife of the well-known minister was insane, that having been confined twice to a sanitarium for "mental trouble," she had been influenced by those who live on charitable associations. It was stated by her exec-

utors that Mrs. Dwight considered her relatives well off since they had inherited the same sum of money from their father as she. Mrs. Dwight was known to have an "extraordinary ability for business."

March - At the Annual Town Meeting, approval was given to create a police department under the Board of Selectmen. The salary for selectmen was increased from \$125 to \$150. The salary for Town Treasurer was increased from \$400 to \$450. Fessenden Co. began a night shift to cover the loss resulting from the destruction by fire of their Brookline plant. A large shipment of barrels was sent to Texas and San Francisco.

April - A Golden Wedding Anniversary celebration was given for Mr. and Mrs. G.L. Whitcome. The family cat awakened sleeping John Johnson whose house was on fire. The only things saved were the cow and the cat. A fire destroyed the "old Baxter place" on West Hill. A heavy guard of State Police was placed over the Townsend National Bank and Post Office on a tip that it was one of several banks to be hit by heavily armed bandits. No incident occurred.

May - At a Special Town Meeting, a committee was given authority to represent the town in regard to the will of Amanda E. Dwight. The Townsend Grange voted to petition the State Division of Public Highways for improvements to the state highway between Groton and Townsend Harbor, the roadway being constructed of sand and gravel in

1903.

June - School overcrowding prompted the calling of another Special Town Meeting. Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon Chute were involved in a fatal car accident when Mr. Chute lost control of his Ford Touring Car while trying to retrieve his hat. He lost his life when the car tipped over. His wife was seriously injured.

July - Townsend held Sesquicentennial observances in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Funds were again running out for Band Concerts. Fundraising events were scheduled.

August - The annual community lawn party raised \$304 at the well attended event.

September - An estimated 1500 cars were present at the Red Cross Lawn Party. Electric lights and Japanese lanterns were scattered about the common. Representatives from the Methodist, Congregational and Baptist churches gathered to plan a church loyalty campaign.

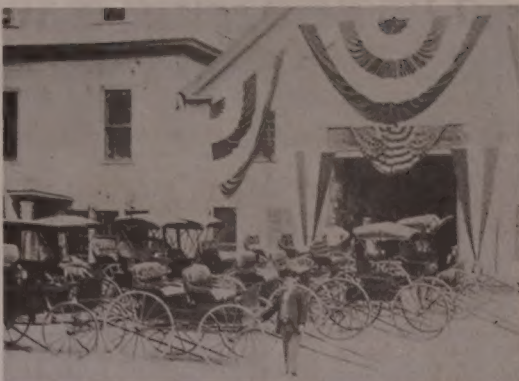
October - Police Chief Harry Felch received certain justice when a bone sliver from the kitty he had just run over punctured his tire and forced him to change it during heavy rains.

November - Thanksgiving sermons at area churches included, "What Have I To Be Thankful For," at the Methodist church, "Thanksgiving, Inside and Out," at the Congregational church, and "Do You Believe in Thanksgiving," at the Baptist church.

December - The Catholic Club held their annual Christmas Party at Memorial Hall with some 140 in attendance. E.C. Fessenden's Garages advertised Fried-Eisemann radios for \$60 for the 5-tube set and \$75 for the 6 tube set.

1927
January - At a meeting of the Townsend Red Cross, Reverend W.T. Hale was elected Chairman and Mrs. Flora Atwood, Vice-Chairman. Plans were discussed for a district nurse and Edward F. Hale was installed as Master of the Townsend Grange.

February - At a meeting of the Board of Selectmen relative to obtaining a district nurse, nearly every church, fraternal, patriotic and social organization was represented in the crowd of 40. A



Putting the carriage before the horse?...Jim Farrar poses in front of his livery stable on Main Street. The building is decorated for the Old Home Day celebration.

committee was appointed to "handle the matter," at Town Meeting. The Congregational church held their annual indoor picnic and athletic meet. Nearly 100 attended.

March - 400 voters were present at the Annual Town Meeting to hear a discussion involving a compromise agreement between the town and the heirs of the Amanda E. Dwight estate. The town agreed to accept 60 percent of their bequest or \$51,000. It was stated that the Hart Memorial Library Fund stood at \$38,000, with the compromise agreement adding another \$15,000 (for a Walter Fessenden Memorial) to the library fund. A committee was elected to proceed with plans for the construction of a library. \$900 was approved for a district nurse for the period of one year. A robbery took place at the home of Harry P. Wright in Townsend Harbor. A pass key was used to enter the dwelling between 1 and 2 p.m., when jewelry and a small amount of cash were taken. The robber was kind enough to lock the door upon leaving.

April - On April 16, Townsend suffered her worst loss to fire in her history. 28 square miles of homes, schools, farm buildings, timber land, orchard, and cut lumber were lost. Several historic landmarks were destroyed. The fire, believed to have been set in a series of small fires, resulted in the calling of a Special Town Meeting to discuss better fire protection apparatus and a town water system. George Mitchell, a resident of School Street, died at

the age of 80. He was a Civil War veteran who worked in Union Adams' copper shop and lived in Townsend during the last 30 years of his life. 33 year old Alvin Harrison was killed when he fell from the seat on the dump cart he was driving and was run over by the rear wheel. William D. King, 71, of Bayberry Hill in West Townsend, was found dead sitting at a table beside a lantern. He was in the same position the previous night when Dr. Richard Ely was called to attend him. John Guinn, a local carpenter, fell 25 feet and landed on his head. His injuries were not serious.

May - \$11,000 was appropriated for fire protection in one of the largest attended Special Town Meetings in years, with over 400 voters present. At a public meeting held in West Townsend, a committee was formed to look into the cost of a water district for West Village. The Baptist Church celebrated its 100th Anniversary.

July - Fourth of July, 1927, was celebrated in fine form by West Townsend, beginning with an impressive parade, and continuing with sporting events, a picnic supper and fireworks. The largest tax rate ever in Townsend was set at \$35.30 per thousand. The increase mainly due to three forest fires and the extra expenses incurred. Townsend Old Home Day was planned by the Franz Waldo Miller Post American Legion 199.

August - 5000 attended the August 10, 1927 Band Concert and Lawn Party. \$251.92 was raised for future concerts. The District Nurse was hard at work preparing children for school. In one of the best Old Home Days on record, 83 cities and towns and 15 states and countries were represented in the fine parade and sporting programs. Thousands attended the first of these events to be held in many years.

September - Plans were begun for a public reception for New Hampshire Governor Huntley N. Spaulding, a Townsend Harbor native son. Townsend announced state plans to construct four miles of new state highway from the Townsend/Groton line to the Whitman Place in West Townsend.

October - Three "joyous" days of the Townsend Chautauqua were planned for November 3, 4 and 5. Events included music, lectures, and entertainment. A shortage of \$6,000 was found in the books of the Town's Tax Collector, after he suddenly disappeared. The State Department was called in to investigate the books. The Tax Collector later returned and surrendered to authorities. The cause of his downfall, he said, was a case of living beyond his means.

November - A reception and supper was tendered for the second of the Spaulding brothers of Townsend Harbor to be elected Governor of New Hampshire. \$6065 was authorized in a Special Town Meeting to pay for damages caused highways and bridges in severe flooding throughout the area.

December - "Make yourself a Christmas present of sufficient insurance, it's an antidote for worry and care," was the Christmas message from G.L. Whitcome Co., an insurance firm established in 1898. The Townsend Red Cross sent out \$25 Christmas boxes to those in need.

1928
January - The town ended 1927 with finances in good shape, reflecting an estimated surplus of \$16,000. This was due, in part, to a \$4000 increase in state funding, up to \$25,000. A two year old Brookline boy choked to death on a penny balloon. Town Officials supported a bill presented to the legislature to create a state reservation by taking by eminent domain sects of land in Ashby and

Townsend adjacent to Willard Brook.

February - The Monday night meeting of the Townsend Grange included a much enjoyed "mock" Town Meeting. Over 200 couples attended a Girl Scout Costume Ball. \$150,000 was expected to be spent on town roads by the state, county and town.

March - Civil War veteran William Bush of Bow Street died at the age of 86. 150 attended the Men's Supper and Entertainment at the Congregational Church vestry.

April - The Library Building Committee report was accepted by Town Meeting. Approval was given to obtain the lot between the National Bank and the Squannacook River for \$1000 and have the Miller residence situated there removed. Plans to build the brick building were to proceed as soon as weather permitted. Suggestions to build a granite building were defeated due to the \$13,000 in additional cost. The Trotter Blacksmith Shop on Dudley Road burned to the ground for the second time.

May - Townsend's Boston Post Cane holder Deacon Samuel Wares died at age 90. A large number of events were planned in observance of Memorial Day.

June - The sudden death of Townsend National Bank President Henry A. Hill shocked the town. He passed away while sitting at the breakfast table.

July - The corner stone of the new Hart Library was laid on July 26, 1928, with appropriate services. Speeding through the Harbor, a result of the new state highway, was announced as an increasing problem. Two dogs and one cat down - children next?

August - In a "Business Review," released in August, Townsend and vicinity was referred to as one of the most progressive communities in the United States, whose businessmen cooperate in every plan promising expansion and development.

September - The American Legion's Second Annual Field Day included a parade, sports, concert and "plenty to eat and drink." In response to a call from the Trustees of the Public Library, back issues of the Town Report were received from the townspeople, dating back to 1840. 331 pupils enrolled in the public schools. A "stirring but peaceful" meeting of the KKK was held in Memorial Hall. An estimated 300-400 were in attendance. A cross with red electric lights burned brightly.

October - At a Special Town Meeting, a committee was formed and called the Amanda E. Dwight Concert, Lecture, and Entertainment Committee. \$100 was appropriated for the protection of Memorial Hall during basketball games. Fred J. Tenney and Co. loaned and installed a new radio in the Center School for a demonstration of the Walter Danurosh musical lectures and programs. Various town organizations came forward to help fund the project.

November - Townsend broke all voting records in November, casting 791 ballots out of a total registration of 885. Herbert Hoover received 632 of the votes cast for president.

December - The first performance given in the Amanda E. Dwight Free Concert, Lecture and Entertainment course was given on Thursday, December 20, 1928, when the Meistersingers of Boston presented a concert in Memorial Hall. In his anxiety to try his new Christmas skates, 12 year old Clyde Young hurried from his house to the Squannacook River in West Townsend. Some time later, when his brother, Russell, went to find him, his frozen body was found in the river with subsequent efforts to revive him in vain.

1929

January - Mrs. Irving Seaver was chosen Chairman of the Townsend Branch of the American Red Cross, with its 252 members. The outstanding event of 1928 was judged to be the formation of a Junior Red Cross, which sent 11 Christmas boxes to children overseas. The State Commission on Taxation spoke before area residents in favor of 100 percent property valuation. Thoughts that lower values and higher tax rates discourage expenditures were said to be false. A tiger stripped wild cat, weighing 26 pounds, was shot by William Copeland after it was flushed by hunting dogs. The West Townsend B&M Railroad Station closed January 29, 1929, with the Center the only station in town with a freight agent. A vote of

Continued on page 11

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This Ad Was Reprinted From
The Townsend Times 1940

Creamery BUTTER 2 lbs. 55c

FRESH WESTERN Eggs Not Sized 2 doz. 39c

BROCKELMAN'S

OLEOMARGARINE lb. 9c

SUGAR 10 LB. CLOTH BAG 49c

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Bacon Shorts 10c lb.-3 lbs. 25c

Fat Salt Pork 7c lb.

Smoked Shoulders 13c lb.

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LIVE KICKING LOBSTERS Chicken 19c lb.
Large 24c lb.

Sunshine Ice Cream 9c Pt.

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Memorial Day Trip

FREE PARKING

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Yes, leave all your cares with us before you set out on that holiday trip. We'll see to it that the tires, brakes and lights are in perfect working order. And we won't forget to fill up your tank with powerful SHELL Gasoline! When you drive out, you'll be headed for pleasure!

AND ANOTHER THING—

Don't let a tire failure mar the pleasure of your holiday. If your tires are worn, let us replace them with Norwalks or States . . . And prices are LOW!

ART BALL

FORD — MERCURY — ZEPHYR SALES

Tel. 10-W Townsend

Townsend and its beginnings

Continued from page 1

municipal rights and all titles to her properties, wrote Sawtelle, rests on a grant from the General Court in the year 1719. The House of Representatives voted to grant two new towns, each containing land not to exceed six miles square. The towns were to be settled in a "defensible manner," on the westerly side of Groton.

A committee of five was empowered to "allot and grant out" the land to persons who would effectually settle the same within three years. The committee was directed to admit 80 families or persons "at least," to each town for the sum of five pounds for each allotment. The province received \$177.60 for the township of Townsend.

Each person to whom such lot or lots shall be granted must agree to build a good dwelling house and inhabit it, fence in at least three acres of land, and a "good convenient" lot must be laid out and reserved for the first settled Minister. A "good convenient" House for the Worship of God in each town must be laid out within four years.

The land taken to form these two towns was known as "Turkey Hills" -- referring to the hills to the south, southwest and west part of these townships. The two townships, designated as North Town and South Town from the years 1719 to 1732, were later to be known as Townsend and Lunenburg.

"The petitioners of the North Town for a charter, in 1732, represented 'that the town was completely filled with inhabitants,'

when probably there were less than two hundred people in town." But on June 29, 1732, the Town of Townshend was chartered.

According to Sawtelle, the township of Townsend was named by the provincial governor after Viscount Charles Townshend, "His Majesty's Secretary of War and his contemporary." He was born in 1676, died in 1738, and was known for his "unblemished character, patriotic moderation, overbearing manners, and impetuous and irascible temper." At about 1780, "Town Clerks and others" began dropping the "h" leaving the township to be spelled as it is today.

At the time of Townsend's charter, Mr. Joseph Stevens, one of the principal inhabitants of the town, was empowered to assemble the inhabitants to chose town officers to stand until the anniversary meeting in March. Some time later, Stevens waived this right and it fell to Benjamin Prescott, Esq. of Groton.

Mention is made during these colonial times of two log houses made in a "defensible manner." The "castles" were located north of the Harbor, overlooking same, and near the meeting house on the hill. Tradition states, wrote Sawtelle, that the log houses and mill, where the Harbor now stands, and the direct surroundings were called "the Harbor," "because by signals from these three points in case of the appearance of any "red skins," the settlers could soon reach these places of safety." One other fort,

or garrison, was located on the southwest side of Ash Swamp, located on a pathway that met the road connecting Townsend and Ashby.

(This explanation of the use of the term "Harbor" for a settlement not adjacent to a coastline or a large body of water was later challenged by John B. Hill in his 1868 Centennial Address at Mason, N.H. Hill suggested that the term "harbor" referred to a locality which was the site of the first concentrated settlement in Townsend, thus serving as the principle mart of trade.)

"In reviewing the poverty and hardships of our forefathers," continued Sawtelle, "it would be well to consider some of the advantages within their reach. One thing especially favorable to them was the productiveness of the soil, never before laid under contribution by the husbandman. This was 'Turkey Hills, North Town.' Wild game was abundant, which, together with cattle, swine, and sheep, made our ancestors a carnivorous, rather than 'carnally minded' people."

"Of wild beasts, the only one particularly inimical to their interests, was the wolf. A price was set upon his head for years. The Indians and the wolves expected no quarter from the settlers, there being considerable difference in the price paid for the heads (or scalps) of each. Captain Lovewell and his men received one hundred pounds for every Indian scalp, wherever taken, while the bounty paid by the settlers was "ten pounds, old tenor, for every wolf killed within the borders of the town, during the



And the band played on...The Townsend Marching Band, organized in 1838, seen here in a photo c. 1904.

year." Farming was a mainstay of this area. "Certain persons were chosen annually to fire the woods to destroy the trees, that grass and luxuriant plants might spring up for cattle, sheep, and horses."

The mode of travel during these times was "somewhat slower and surer than was either pleasant or convenient. Oxen hitched to an awkward, clumsy, two-wheeled vehicle, as an apology for a cart, were used to convey parties to church, to weddings, and evening entertainments," when road conditions would allow.

For more distant travel, or over rough roads, horseback was the mode of travel. Often husband, wife and children mounted a single horse from the horse-block. In 1806, the Boston and Keene stages began to run, making three trips a week. This evolved into daily trips with stops to dine at West Townsend.

The church, or "tabernacle," though "crude and uncouth," was considered "amiable" to those settlers, whose home libraries consisted of "the Bible, the Psalter, a few pamphlets, and some well read religious books." Religion was close to the hearts of these early settlers and central to colonial Townsend life.

The spinning wheel was introduced by the settlers of Londonderry in 1719, and thought to have been generally used. Implements of husbandry and agriculture "must have been extremely unhandy, and continued

so for a long time." The first meeting house is thought to have been built in the late 1720's.

"The exemplary moral character of these descendants (sic) of the pilgrims, must not be overlooked. Our ancestors not only believed in integrity of character, but they lived as they believed."

At the first legal meeting of the proprietors, held July 31, 1732, Edward Sherman was chosen Moderator, Jasher Wyman, clerk. Along with a further division of lands, a tax was assessed of 150 pounds, "to be proportioned according to each proprietors' respective interest." The last meeting of the proprietors was held in 1822, with the duty of allotting and granting lands in Townsend finished. "There were

about seven hundred and fifty titles to land in town...there were one hundred and sixty grantees under the proprietors, some having lands in ten or twelve different parts of town."

Concerning the settlers of this town, many of whom were military men, Sawtelle wrote, "Something of an incomprehensible character comes down to us from these bold and intrepid men. They appear almost within the environment of romance, rather than struggling for homes where they could enjoy freedom to worship God. Some barrier, always overcome, generally interposed between them and success."

"...And when, after a long time, they began to enjoy the fruits of their labors, and hymns of gratitude ascended from their altars, their King taxed them beyond their endurance and compelled them to draw the sword. Then came the tug of war in which they were again victorious."

Reverend Mr. Phineas Hemenway became Townsend's first Pastor in 1734, and remained so for 27 years. Several years prior to his ordination, Townsend's first Meeting House was erected on Meeting House Hill, which was selected as the Town's religious and municipal center.

The "pew ground" was laid out within the church, with the most desirable pew locations given to those who paid the most toward the preaching of the Gospel.

Continued on page 6



Post WWII Main Street...A view of Main Street at the west corner of Bow Street, c. 1946. The building at far right is now McNabb's Pharmacy.

2 Depot Street, Townsend, MA 01469

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Your Hosts: The Dickhaut Family
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French Fries.....\$2.10
Potatoe Skins.....\$3.99
Fried Mushrooms.....\$3.99
Fried Mozzarella Sticks.....\$3.99
Fried Zucchini.....\$3.99
Nachos.....\$3.99
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SOUPS

Fr. Onion Soup.....\$1.25/2.50
Soup of the Day.....\$1.25/2.50

SALADS

Tossed Salad.....\$1.50
Chef Salad.....\$4.95

PASTA
Homemade
Thin, flat homemade spaghetti
Sauce.....\$5.50
Meatballs.....\$6.95
Veal Cutlet.....\$9.25
Chicken.....\$6.95
Steak.....\$10.95

CHEESE RAVIOLI
Meat or cheese ravioli
Sauce.....\$5.95
Meatballs.....\$6.95
Veal Cutlet.....\$9.25
Chicken.....\$8.95
Steak.....\$10.95

CHEESE MANICOTTI
Two cheese manicotti
Sauce.....\$6.95
Meatballs.....\$7.95
Veal Cutlet.....\$9.25
Chicken.....\$8.95
Steak.....\$10.95

HOUSE SPECIALTIES
Friday & Saturday only
Served with Salad, Homemade Bread & Butter

Prime Rib \$11.95 **B.B.Q. Pork Chops \$9.95** **Baked Stuffed Haddock \$8.95**

DINNERS
Served with Salad, Homemade Bread & Butter
Sirloin Steak.....\$10.95
Boneless Chicken.....\$6.95

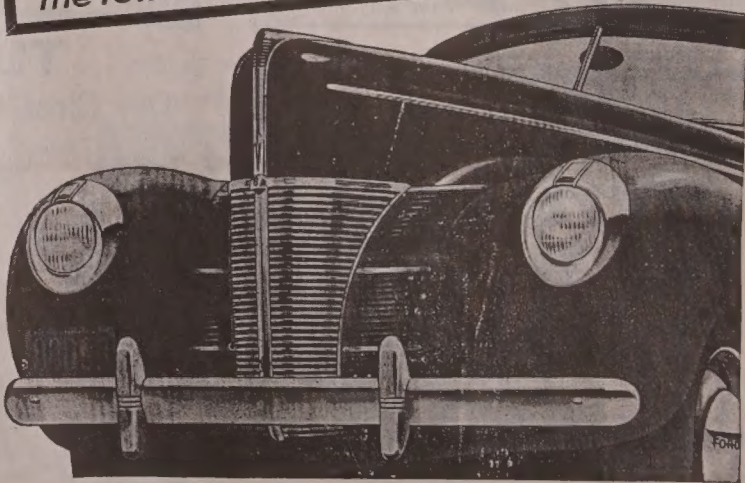
FRESH SEAFOOD
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Fisherman's Platter.....\$10.95
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DELIVERED PRICES IN TOWNSEND

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TELEPHONE 10-W

TOWNSEND

Townsend and its beginnings... from Sawtelle's 1878 "The History of the Town of Townsend"

Continued from page 5

Reverend Hemenway, who passed away in 1760, was followed by Reverend Samuel Dix in 1761. "When Mr. Dix came to this town, log-cabins were about going out of fashion, being superseded by substantial frame houses, made from lumber sawed at 'Conant's mill,' or the mill at the Harbor."

"In most instances, these houses were large, uncomfortable two-story structures, the rooms on the first floor being generally finished with a suitable panel work ceiling. The second story, which was the dormitory of the family, except the parents, seldom had any finish..."

It was in 1769 that the town voted to build a new Meeting House within 30 feet of the old one. It was completed in 1771, providing ample space for the town's 700 inhabitants. "Within its consecrated walls, the followers of the Master worshipped, the citizens devised plans to meet all the wants of the town in its corporate capacity, the training band assembled...the Selectmen discussed their duties, and the smouldering patriotism of an oppressed people burst into flame."

Throughout 1797, "considerable dislike was manifested towards the uncentral location of this meetinghouse." In 1797, too, Reverend Dix died after a ministry of 37 years, and was replaced by Reverend David Palmer in



A barrel of fun...John Morse and Melvin Davis make barrels for the Fessenden Co. — by hand!

1800. In 1804 it was agreed that the Meeting House would be moved to the town's center and finished.

Townsend, at the time of the ordination of this third Minister, "was an entirely different town from what it was when either of his predecessors entered the ministry. The privations attending the converging of a wilderness into a

township, filled with the industries and embellishments of civilized life, had all been endured and accomplished. The eventful days of the Revolutionary War, through which our fathers struggled and bled, had all taken their places on the historian's page... Enterprise and progress were the watchwords at the commencement of the present century."

The nineteenth century brought with it more people, more building and more industry. The New Hampshire turnpike was finished, passing directly in front of the church. "Convergent town roads were commenced and finished to this common center of the town."

With the beginnings of industry in 1733 that began with the construction of the first mill, located in the Harbor, progress continued with 36 manufacturing establishments listed in the Townsend census of 1875. "...no monument is ever erected on the spot, once cheered by the hum of happy industry, where a mill has rotted down, or been swept away by fire or flood..."

The approach toward the education of the young changed, too, in Townsend, in the ensuing years of the nineteenth century. Schooling that had centered in the home around cozy fires and pine knot light changed in 1744, with the first attempt at public education. Along with funds appropriated for the hiring of a school master, it was further stated that school



Take me out to the ball game...A Townsend baseball team, around 1913. Back row: Stephen Keefe, Robert Fessenden and Stanley Fessenden. Middle: Thomas O'Toole, Robert Teehan, Harry Whitcomb, Harley Parker and Elwin Swicker. Front: Rodney Lancey, Harry Knight, Arthur Eastman and Victor Swicker. Seated in front: Marshall Higgins, bat boy.

should be kept in different dwellings, in different parts of town.

The first school house is thought to have been built in 1747, near the site of the first meetinghouse. In 1763, the town was divided into "squadrons," or districts, for the convenience of schooling. "The names given to these squadrons were the North, East, South, Bayberry Hill, West, Northwest, and Centre schools." Most of these houses were built in 1784.

In 1796, the first School Committee was formed, with one rep-

resentative from each school. Larger school houses were built to replace the original seven between 1802 and 1810. The town voted to number the school districts 18 years following the organization of the first school committee.

In 1836 a young ladies seminary was built in West Townsend, but after a successful existence of 25 years, the school failed, a result of financial mismanagement. The building was purchased by the town in 1870 and used for "graded school."

Townsend Academy was built in the center in 1841, but interest flagged within a decade. In 1851, District No. 1 bought the building, moved it to Highland Street, and used it for a public school house until it burned in 1870.

"Since the State Board of Education was established, the town has kept pace with the general progress of education throughout the Commonwealth," noted Sawtelle.

Religion has always taken its rightful place in Townsend. With the building of Townsend's first church ten years after its charter, a single church with a single divine leader reigned until 1825, when the "great tidal wave" of Unitarianism arrived in Townsend with the coming of Reverend Dr. Thayer of Lancaster.

"The Congregationalists, considering that another church was about to be organized in Townsend, saw that their church must have a more definite name than, 'The church of Christ in Townsend,' and assumed the name, 'The Orthodox Congregational Church in Townsend,' in 1830."

In that year, the Congregationalists built their brick church. Though the Unitarians took over the meetinghouse in 1829, there were no regular meetings on the sabbath for some time after the Congregationalists left. For many years, until 1852, when the first parish sold the meetinghouse to the Methodist Society, the Unitarians had no settled minister.

The Baptist Society was formed in Townsend in 1813, with inauguration of the church in 1827. The Baptist Church was erected in 1835. The Universal Restoration Society, at West Townsend, was organized March 4, 1848, with

their brick church building completed in 1849. St. John's Catholic Church was built on School Street in 1883.

The Unitarians built their church in the Harbor in 1853. Following the departure of Unitarian preacher Reverend Stillman Barber, wrote Sawtelle, "nothing, of late, has been heard of 'The First Parish in Townsend.' The fathers of this denomination have been gathered to the innumerable multitude of the departed, and the temple of worship erected by their sons, now stands deserted, cheerless, and seldom entered for any purpose whatever."

Times of war and conflict were intertwined throughout this Town's history. May it best be said by Sawtelle, who wrote, "...All that is claimed for Townsend, during those days that tried men's souls, is that the town did its duty in a commendable manner, compared with the other towns of this time-honored Commonwealth."

As Sawtelle's history concluded, Townsend's went on. The Townsend Cornet Band was formed in 1838. Memorial Hall was erected in 1894. The Townsend Historical Society founded in 1896. B. & A.D. Fessenden held a "mill warming" in 1900. World War I heroes returned in 1919, with the exception of the eight lost to battle. World War II, as with other battles, was fought and won with Townsend contributing her share of heroes returned and heroes lost.

The history of Townsend, only touched here, is rich and full with lives spent in service to God, to community, to self. The devotion to this town, felt by so many, is made clear when remembering the numerous bequests to the preservation and betterment of this place and her people.

It may be said that a town is deemed as good as the people therein, its future as promising as the lessons learned from its past...

"Oh checkered train of years, farewell, With all thy strifes, and hopes, and tears; But with us let the memories dwell To warm and teach the coming years." (Sawtelle)

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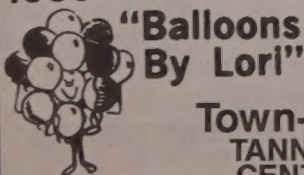
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Basketball memories

Continued from page 1

girls games preceded the boys and often fans had to be turned away, the gym filling up early.

"...Long before game time the doors of the building had to be locked due to the terrific number of persons who wanted to witness the battles. It was estimated that fully 300 fans were unable to gain entrance," the Times reported in the January 24, 1946 paper of a Townsend-Lunenburg clash.

Where now old school desks and filing cabinets are stored, Townsend's basketball greats once drilled set shots and layups...

... Joanne Barrett, Dick Rutherford, Paula Renda, Dick Brown... Sally Laventure... Rich Spofford... Florence Reynolds... Rachel Lecuyer...

"It was one of the best gyms in the business," recalled Allan Foresman, a former Ashby player and coach. "Probably the only gym around that was any better was Fitchburg High's."

Each March, Townsend showcased its gymnasium, like a girl's pretty dress at Easter, with the Small Schools Tournament.

Schools from all over the area came to play in the tournament, in front of huge crowds...

"I recall that so many of the games were nip and tuck," said Townsend's Bob Tumber, a former Townsend hoopster in the early '40's. "The games against Lunenburg and Pepperell were often close and controversial."

"... in the semi-final, Townsend

and Pepperell staged one of the hardest fought contests of the three days of play..." Townsend Times - 1940.

"...Lunenburg defeated Townsend 33-26 in a replay of the fabulously disputed game, originally won by Townsend 35-34..." - Townsend Times 1946.

"I would say Townsend's biggest rival in basketball was Lunenburg," said legendary Townsend sportsman Bunk Brown. "If you didn't get to the gym early when they played you had to stand, and they had some real close battles."

"...Townsend trailing 41-40 with eight seconds left and the place in bedlam..." Bobby Farrar

Continued on page 8



TOWNSEND HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL 1942-43.



TOWNSEND HIGH GIRLS BASKETBALL 1944-45.

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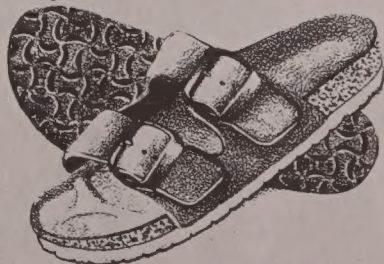
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Basketball memories

Continued from page 7

layed in a full court pass (to defeat Lunenburg 42-41)... - The Townsend Times Jan. 3, 1947.

The Townsend roundballers were directed by top notch coaches such as Dick Roberts, Verne Quimby and Dick Rutherford.

In 1939, Roberts led the Townsend boys to the Small Schools Championship, when he placed guard Dick Coffey on tourney MVP, center Ray Burke of Wilton, New Hampshire, in the championship game.

"... Coffey held him to two baskets (that came) in the final minute of the game..." - Townsend Times, 1939.

Quimby's teams of the mid-40's brought a new brand of basketball, "...Townsend's famed racehorse style of play..." the Times described the fastbreak style, as used at Rhode Island State.

"Verne's teams were powerhouse in the mid-40's," said Ashbyite Foresman. "He had excellent ballplayers and they played a wide open game."

Quimby's early and mid-40's teams, for all their successes,

broke the Townsendites hearts in '44, '45 and '46 when they could not take th championship of their own prestigious tourney.

In 1944, Townsend fell to a Milford, New Hampshire team that they had "... badly beaten twice during the season... Milford beat Townsend 38-32 in the tournament, ending Townsend High School's hope for the championship," reported the Times.

In 1945 a 25-0 Townsend wagon, nicknamed the "Bombers" by the Times' Mr. X (anonymous sportswriter Dick Rutherford), fell to Marlboro, New Hampshire 48-42 as the championship remained elusive.

In 1946, Townsend was dealt a huge upset by rival Ashby in the finals. "...Why does Townsend flop so miserably when they reach the finals of the Townsend tourney..." wrote the Times' new columnist Bunk Brown.

In 1947 the wait for the precious championship ended, as Quimby's squad, despite being ravaged by graduation, won the Wachusett League and their own tourney championship behind Leominster transfer Charlie Dyer

and tourney MVP Marc MacKenzie, who netted 62 points in three games.

The tourney ended in the mid-50's, ending the March Madness that packed the gymnasium each year.

"...One of the crying shames here in Townsend is the fact that we no longer sponsor this popular event..." - Townsend Times', Bunk's Banter, Feb. 27, 1958.

The rich tradition of basketball in Townsend went back before the Spaulding School was built, with many outstanding players that played their hoop in the Town Hall gym.

Bunk's Banter, the weekly Times sports column, asked for submissions of the greatest players of all-time in 1946 and the names poured in.

...William Bailey... Roy Brown... Christine Robichaud... Dorothy Ballou... William Domina... Paul Prevost... "Taper" Truell... Roger Sherwin... Rita Atmiller... Helen Whitcomb... Bill Sims... Bob Kingham... Ken Keefe... Carol Farrar... Veino Koski... Ruth Copeland... Nancy Farrar..."

The stage, which was last used for office space and storage a few years ago, once held bleachers and chairs to squeeze in extra fans to watch the local roundballers...

"... "Gunner" Cook... Jean Makela... Stretch Schultze... Herbie Wheeler... Charlie Dyer... Dick Hallissey... Bill Marquis... Buich Frank... Carol Willard... Buich Peterson... Herbie Hotaling..."

The future plans for the gymnasium, if and when the building is renovated, is for it to be converted into a library.

Future Townsend students who browse through books in a quiet library may just hear, if they listen closely, the toots of whistles, squeaks of sneakers, bouncing of basketballs and cheering of fans...

"...Nineteen teams took part in the event, playing before crowds that taxed the capacity of the auditorium..." - Townsend Times, 1942.



TOWNSEND HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL 1946-47.



Wachusett League Champs...The 1935-36 Townsend High Boys Basketball Team.



TOWNSEND HIGH BOYS BASKETBALL 1956-57.



TOWNSEND HIGH GIRLS BASKETBALL 1956-57.

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Townsend

Town baseball played for the fun of it

by John Margarita

He's 80 years young, and has lived in the same house all of his life (except during his years in the service), a house which once stood behind the Spaulding School, but was later moved (along with four others) when the school was built.

It's only appropriate that Rollie Spofford's house was moved to one side of the baseball field at Fessenden Field to the other side (on Main St.) as Spofford crossed many a ballfield from the age of 15 to 40, playing for Townsend in the old Village League and Middlesex County League.

"I started playing when I was 15 years old, in 1927," Spofford recalled. "The Middlesex County League was real good baseball back then with teams from Lowell, Billerica, Maynard and Concord.

"The Village League was the town teams like Ashby, Pepperell and Lunenburg."

Spofford started playing in an era that did not know television or men's softball leagues. Every town had a team, and the town turned out to see them each weekend.

"I remember playing in front of 1,500 fans over at Forge Village in Westford," Spofford recalled. "In Townsend the fans used to pack Fessenden Field. We had Old Home Day and the fans would pack the place; they had to rope off the field.

"But the years went by and the crowds started to peter out and we couldn't make enough money to pay the umpires."

"I was sponsored by a guy named Webster, who ran a store in West Townsend. Each player had a sponsor.

"We played for the fun of it back then. When I see that Roger Clemens will get \$1,000 per pitch, I think that it has stopped being a sport and is now a business and may ruin baseball.

"Of course we played all sports back then and had a lot of fun. We played ice hockey on the ponds



The boys of summer...Townsend's Town Baseball Team, c. 1930. Back row: Richard Conant, Bill Robbins, Herbert Spofford and William Creighton. Front row: Roy Brown, Jr. (scorer), Clayton Truell, Paul Prevost, Howard Morse, Howard Warren, Rollan Spofford, Ralph Conant, Carl Farrar, David Keefe, Elwin Swicker and Dick Rusk.

and tackle football in the fall. For baseball, we used to tape up an old ball and use whatever we had for a bat, but we enjoyed it."

Spofford, later an accomplished horseshoe pitcher and bowler, played all sports, but baseball was his first love.

"I was only about a .250 or .260 hitter," said Spofford. "I played outfield and second base, though I didn't have a real strong arm in the outfield, but I loved to play.

"Playing the infield was tough back then as the field was all crabgrass. The ball would shoot up and hit you in the Adam's apple and almost knock you out, either that or you'd expect the bounce and it would shoot through your legs.

"You'd end up playing a ground ball with one hand up by your chest and one on the ground. The outfield wasn't all that easy either at Fessenden Field because there used to be an oak tree in center field."

When Spofford played, the grandstand at Fessenden Field would fill up, and below the

grandstand there were dressing rooms for the players.

The town supported the local nine, they were a link to the community's identity.

The Times reported a September 1928 end of the season baseball Sunday in which the Townsend team in the Village League travelled to Ashby to play the third and deciding game of the season at 3:00 and the players and fans packed up an drove to Marshall Park in Lunenburg to complete the series with the Lunenburg squad.

"We had good games with Lunenburg and Ashby," said Spofford. "I remember playing up in Ashby a lot.

"We had some real good ballplayers in Townsend. The best hitter I ever saw was Dave Keefe, who reminded me a lot of (Wade) Boggs. He had that inside-outside swing and could take an outside pitch and drive it to left field.

"The best pitcher I remember was Jack Hallisev, a righty who had a real deceptive shoulder motion that threw you off.

"Ian Rusk was also a good pit-

cher, a knuckleballer. I broke a couple of fingers trying to catch his throws once.

"There were a lot of good players and I am sure I am leaving a lot out. Clifford Montgomery was a lefthanded batter and a good hitter, but he broke a lot of bats. I remember we only had about six bats, but we had a heavy Lou Gehrig model that stood up real well. Even Clifford couldn't break it.

"Dick Rusk, Louis Josselyn, Carl Farrar, Taper Truell, Plucky Zwicker, Paul Prevost, Dick Conant, Howard Harvey, who played at Dartmouth - there were a lot of them and some of the players we played against were outstanding.

"Jim Woods of West Groton was the best fielding shortstop I ever saw. Westford had a cracker-jack shortstop named Gene Smith and a colored guy by the name of Woodson, who was a real good ballplayer who I think could have made the major leagues if blacks weren't barred back then.

"I guess my best game that I remember was my first game with the team in the Middlesex County League. We were playing over at

Lowell and I played left field. Carl Farrar got to third base on a single I made. We then put on a double steal and I dove into second base while Carl scored the only run of the game."

Spofford went overseas during World War II, but still played in the service on one of the service teams.

"We had some guys that played on college teams and the Lieutenant asked me who I played for and I told him the Townsend team in the Village League. Where the hell is that he snapped.

"We played against some real good minor league teams. We played the Memphis Chicks with Pete Gray, the one-armed ballplayer."

At the age of 40, Spofford called it a career. "I slowed down, couldn't run anymore, all the things that happen when you get older," he said.

Spofford kept his eye on the game after his active career ended. "I'd take a walk over and watch the high school game once in awhile," Spofford said. "But I didn't follow it real close.

"I sometimes go over to the field and watch the Little Leaguers now and I enjoy it. They make a lot of mistakes, but so didn't we when we were young.

"I was always a Boston Braves fan, but since they've left I root for the Red Sox."

Spofford pointed to the radio on his kitchen table. "I listened to the Red Sox the other day, against the Kansas City Royals. They are my team now."

The Townsend Times of May 3, 1923 published a poem on its front page which summed up baseball in small towns like Townsend in those earlier, simpler times.

*Baseball
They may talk about picnics,
Of concerts, and fairs,
Or waltzing around in a hall,
But there's really nothing on
earth*

*That I really enjoy
Like a good hustling game of
baseball*

*With the pitching and catching
Hot grounders and flies*

*Foul tips, speedy fielders and
all
Why, a scrap at town meeting
Is nothing compared with
A good, snappy game of
baseball*

*But it really seems strange
How some people act
One would think them bereft of
good sense*

*They throw their hats in the air
And scream till they're hoarse,
When a homer sails over the
fence*

*When you are feeling
discouraged,
And are "all out of sorts"*

*While dull care does your spirit
enthral,*

Just hich up, "Old Dubbin"

*And take the wife and kids
And enjoy a good game of
baseball*

The Rollie Spoffords of the first half of this century played the game for the love of the sport while a community rallied around them and took pride in their players and team.

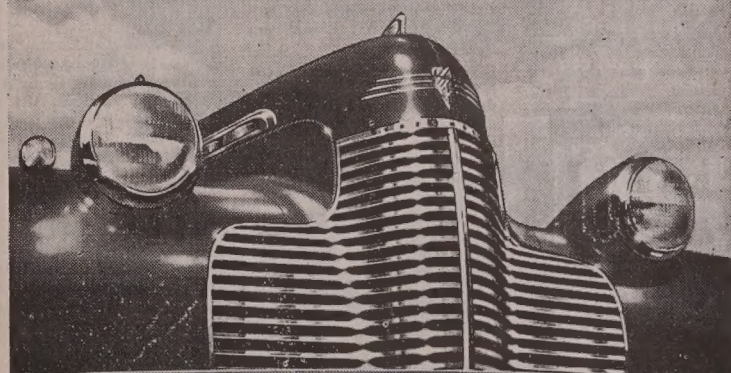
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Early Townsend High grid teams were tough

by John Margarita

Townsend Football of the '20's

Football Friday nights have become a happening in Townsend, with the advent of the lights and the success of the North Middlesex Regional High School Patriots on the gridiron.

The rise to football prominence at North Middlesex took many years, with the Pats playing four and a half seasons before winning a game.

The early years of futility (1962-66) were in part attributed to the unfamiliarity with the sport to the boys of Pepperell and Townsend (Ashby was not in the District at the time.)

The Patriots reached the pinnacle of their football glory in 1989, capturing the Division 2 Super Bowl to complete a perfect 11-0 season.

In the North Middlesex highlight film of that season, legendary Townsend sportsman Bunk Brown, who covered the Patriots for the Times since the first North Middlesex season, is shown addressing the team after the Lunenburg victory on Thanksgiving.

"This is the best team I've seen around here (North Middlesex)," said Brown.

What most people do not know is that Brown is the link to football roots in Townsend that goes back almost 40 years beyond that first North Middlesex season in 1962.

"...the Townsend backs were usually able to get through the Academy line but numerous penalties, due to the unfamiliarity with the rules, set the Townsend team back and frequently put the Academy in position to score."

The passage from the Times could have well been from a game report of a North Middlesex-Westford tilt of the early '60's, but it came from the October 4, 1923 edition of the Times, a report of the first Townsend High School football game against Lawrence Academy.

The Townsend boys played high school football for three seasons, 1923-25, before the sport was discontinued.

Bunk Brown was the captain and quarterback on that first Townsend gridiron squad.

"Carl Farrar was the coach and he had played at Lawrence Academy," said Brown. "He got things started. We were only given shirts by the school - we had to get our own equipment. Farrar had a pair of football shoes and since I was the quarterback he gave them to me."

The Townsend team played a schedule that consisted of second teams of larger schools, some independent teams with players out of high school and some smaller high schools.

"We had only two footballs, we played with one and had one in reserve," Brown recalled. "And the players and coaches lined the field. We played at what is now Fessenden Field at Spaulding School."

"There were dressing rooms under the old grandstand and that's where we dressed. Of course there were no showers, you waited until you got home to shower or take a bath."

In that historic first game against Lawrence Academy, the Townsend boys had already competed in a track meet in the morning.

"... though the THS players were fatigued by the morning track meet... the Townsend backs were able to get through the line," the Times reported.

Charlie Jodrey scored the first Townsend touchdown in history, a 78 yard kickoff return, in the 13-6 loss to the Academyites.

The Townsendites fell to 0-2

with a 12-7 loss to the Shirley Industrial School for Boys on October 12th of '23 before copping the first football victory in Townsend, 43 years before North Middlesex topped Westford Academy for the historic first NM win.

The October 11 Townsend Times drummed up support for the new sport.

"The football boys of the high school play their first home game here on Friday at 2:30 p.m., meeting the strong Lowell Independents on the Athletic Field."

"The boys have played two games away from home and, although losing both, it was by small scores against larger schools, and they are putting up a good game and deserve the encouragement of the town in their effort to bring this branch of sport up to the strength of the other lines made by our school."

"The players will be dressed in their new playing clothes that have just been received, with the blue stockings and jerseys with white stripes. Let's all turn out and give the boys encouragement."

The Townsend boys came through, downing the Lowell squad 19-7, with right halfback Howard Harvey scoring all of Townsend's points on three touchdown runs and also kicking an extra point.

"Howard Harvey was a very successful drop kicker," said Bunk Brown, who along with Jodrey are the only living members of the first squad. "He later went to Dartmouth and was a real good center fielder."

Two years later the Townsend Times noted that Harvey, "... last year's graduate (RHB) is on the A list at Worcester Academy, alternating with Henry Hornell of Medford." Hornell later became a nationally known sprinter at NYU.

The Townsend squad, with a win under their belt, travelled to Gardner to take on the second team of the Wildcats.

"We were playing them pretty tough," said Brown. "And their coach said to Carl Farrar, our coach, that he'd like to bring up some varsity players. He did and we still did all right."

The game ended in a 7-7 tie, and the Gardner News of October 19th reported that the "Gardner subs looked good against Townsend in their first season of football."

Townsend's impressive performance against Gardner's second team and their ensuing game against Fitchburg's second team, a 19-0 Fitchburg win, had an impact on the Townsend-Leominster rivalry, which had to wait until last fall (1991) to begin, with the North Middlesex Patriots and the Blue Devils playing at John Young Memorial Field.

Townsend and Leominster had agreed to have a game in 1923, but the game was cancelled. The reason for the cancellation has two versions, the Townsend



"Bunk" Brown

version and the Leominster version.

The Townsend version is that Leominster wanted no part of Townsend after Townsend played a Gardner squad "... with eight first stringers," according to the Times, to a 7-7 tie, while Gardner pounded Leominster 50-0 that season.

The Leominster version is detailed in a letter from the Leominster Athletic Director to the Townsend Athletic Director, that was published by the Times.

"Dear Sir," After our conversation on the telephone yesterday, I learned that you are scheduled to play the Fitchburg second team. Of course you will understand that Fitchburg has always been our rival and naturally we do not think it wise for our first team to play a team which plays the second team of an ancient rival. We know you will understand this. However to complete this matter, I will be very glad to have our second team play in Townsend, providing you can give us enough to pay the expenses of 16 or 18 men, players and coach... respectfully yours, E.J. Schulte, Athletic Director.

Anyone unfamiliar with the Fitchburg-Leominster rivalry need only read the 1923 letter to understand why 10,000 people annually fill Doyle or Crocker Field on Thanksgiving Day.

The game was never played as the Leominster Athletic Director informed Townsend (in another letter printed by the Times) that the coach could not spare any players.

The Townsend boys closed out the season with a five game winning streak. Before the streak began, the Times reported that a local loom company donated its truck to take the boys to Crocker Field in Fitchburg to take in the Fitchburg-Waltham game. "No question the occasional chances to see the large schools in action will only help the boys."

Howe High of Billerica was the first victim, a 13-0 Townsend win at the Townsend Athletic Field on October 27th.

Jodrey began the scoring with a 50 yard TD run and Harvey added a 15 yarder on a "trick forward pass formation" and then dropped the extra point.

The Townsend following wasn't up to the 1990's standards in 1923, however and the Times noted, "... a woeful lack of support in contrast to the Howe cheering section."

Townsend then defeated the Nashua second team 10-7, as Brown set up a Jodrey TD with a long end run, Harvey kicking the extra point and also a field goal.

The Times noted, "... notice school faculty at the game and better attendance overall."

The Townsend team, it was reported in the Times, was scheduled to play the Manchester West second team on November 17, as a preliminary to the Manchester West-Brockton varsity game, but no account of the game being played was reported.

The third game of the Townsend win streak goes a long way in explaining the heated rivalry that existed between Townsend and Pepperell for years, as the

Townsend squad annihilated Pepperell 103-0.

Brown scored six touchdowns, Jodrey five, Harvey two, along with a player named Landry (no first name given) and a TD by Hartford (again no first name given).

"I still feel bad about that game," said Brown, 69 years later. "You'd a thought we would have stopped scoring in the 50's."

"But then we only had 15 players and it wasn't like we could have substituted much."

Pepperell did not make a first down in the game and were also hampered by, as the Times reported, "... three Pepperell first stringers (did not play) were down in their studies."

Win number four in the streak came against the Lowell second team, an 18-7 victory. Brown accounted for all the scoring with three touchdowns.

"The best player we had was Charlie Jodrey," Brown noted. "He was a big, strong fullback in the single wing offense and he'd go up the middle or off-tackle and was tough to bring down."

"Carl Farrar put in the offense and the plays all had numbers. Charlie wasn't all that great with numbers. Finally one game he said to me in the huddle, 'forget this number stuff and just give me the football' - we did and it usually worked."

The Townsend squad was originally scheduled to play the Alumni in a Thanksgiving Day game, but a rematch was scheduled with Pepperell for a Turkey Day clash to be played at the Townsend Athletic Field (admission 35 cents).

The teams had to be renamed the Independents, as both teams used "town players", with Pepperell using "...three or more town players."

Townsend prevailed 19-6, with Louis Josslyn, a "town player" scoring two touchdowns, along with a TD tally and extra point kick by Harvey.

The December 27 Times of 1923 praised the grid team of '23, noting that they scored 207 points to their opponents 86 and that "Roy Brown, captain, played in every game without being taken out."

In 1924 the Times only reported Townsend playing in four games, and winning three of them.

The Townsendites opened their season, for the second year, with a track meet in the morning and Lawrence Academy in the afternoon.

Townsend defeated LA 18-6 and Fitchburg's second team 27-0 before another match with old rival Pepperell.

The Times of October 30, 1924 reported the Townsend Independents - Pepperell Independents grid tilt. Pepperell High played eight "outsiders" and Townsend played five, including the graduated Bunk

Brown, who scored a TD in Townsend's 26-0 victory.

The game was a controversial one with "Pepperell claiming unfair tactics."

The November 8th Times reported a 20-0 loss to Lawrence Academy. "The boys needed to put in more practice."

The 1925 season brought a new coach, Carl Chapman and returned Jodrey for a third season, as he captained the team.

The Townsend boys went 5-2, losing to Amesbury 37-0 in the opener and to Keene Normal 32-6.

The game with Keene's first team was a strong showing by the Townsend boys, who according to the Times, "averaged 140 pounds to Keene's 175... yet it appeared to be a great rivalry between the two schools."

Townsend defeated Shirley 13-7, Fitchburg's second team 32-0, Gardner's second team 7-0, Lawrence Academy 20-3 and Pepperell for the fourth time in as many tries, 12-7 on October 29.

Apparently the hard feelings of 1923 were gone as the Times noted that "seven players attended the Harvard-William and Mary game, as guests of Father Connolly, the Pepperell Coach."

However a second game against Pepperell was called off, as were games with Athol and Keene's second team.

In 1926 the Times only reported that "the high school is unable to have a team, the reason is most of the candidates are down in their studies."

In 1927 it was simply stated in the Times, "Townsend High School will not have a football team."

The sport never returned to Townsend until the regional school came and the North Middlesex Patriots were born as a practice team in 1961, and then a varsity squad in 1962.

"It tickles me now to see North Middlesex playing the likes of Fitchburg and Leominster and holding their own," said Brown. "Back then they looked down their noses at us: They thought of us as a hick town."

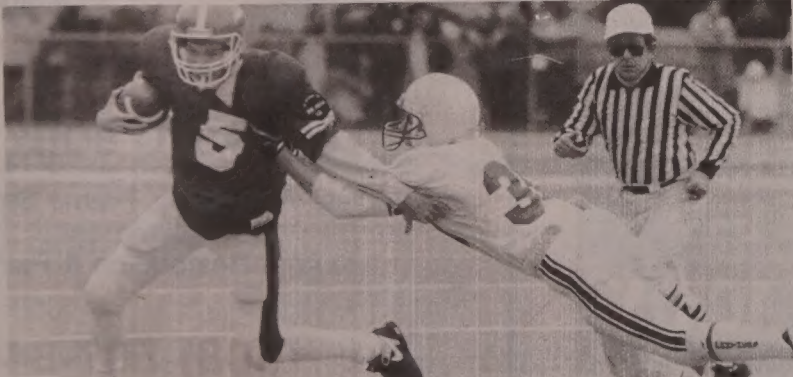
"Of course back then we couldn't have gone against those teams consistently."

"I remember vividly scrimmaging against Fitchburg's first team at Crocker Field and I'd never been hit like that before, and I'm sure Nashua, Leominster, Lowell and Gardner's first teams were all the same."

"I was disappointed the school gave it up. Football is still my second favorite sport, after baseball."

"One of the things I'm most happy about in athletics is the success of football at North Middlesex, after all the years of losing."

The North Middlesex community has applauded and praised the recent exploits of the Lawlors, Bloods and Cashtons, and yet, somewhere there is also applause coming from... Farrar, Jodrey and Harvey, the first gridmen of Townsend.



New breed of Townsend gridman...The elusive Kevin Lawlor of Townsend heightened the success of North Middlesex football almost seven decades after the advent of football in town behind the likes of Bunk Brown and Chuck Godfrey at Townsend High School.

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The Roaring Twenties

Continued from page 4

thanks was given to the kindly soul who filled the cross cuts over culverts in the newly completed section of state highway. One rider remarked he could now light his cigarette without having it jolted down his throat. Since construction of the highway, 100 residents had lamented the loss of many beloved pets to speeding motorists.

February - Boston Post Cane holder and Civil War veteran W.H. Tenney of West Townsend died at the age of 89. The Townsend Historical Society was reformed on February 18, 1929, with a request for donations of any historical relics or data to the society for placement in the historical room of the new library building. A hearing held on state establishment of the Willard Brook reservation heard some opposition from landowners in the area, but overwhelming support from the majority in attendance including Townsend Officials.

March - An announcement stated that the Townsend Public Library, housed in a room in Memorial Hall since 1894, would move to the new Hart Free Library building to be opened March 2, for 20 hours a week. Criticism was voiced at the Annual Town Meeting over the choice of a dump location. Objections centered around the dumping of debris near two residences on the Turnpike Road site. A decision by the meeting moved the dump's access and dumping points. The newly ordered Board of Health was organized. The Old Tavern on Townsend Road was remodeled and restored to its original condition by new owners, Mr. and Mrs. Bazley. The New Park Hotel was raided by State Police with a cache of three gallons of mixed liquor found in a recess in the roof. Charges were brought against the owner and two employees.

April - Townsend bid farewell to one of its oldest citizens, George L. Eastman, 79. At a meeting of the Townsend Grange, "Abolishing Capital Punishment," was the topic of guest speaker Angier Goodwin, Massachusetts State Grange.

May - The Harbor Parish Society began preparation for a series of events to raise money for repairs to the church, suffered in a thunder storm.

June - Massachusetts Governor Allen signed the Willard Brook bill providing for the establishment of a state forest reservation. The West Townsend Baptist Church steeple was struck by lightning and badly damaged. The L.B.B.S. Bazaar of the Baptist Church was held on church grounds with the day's events judged highly successful.

July - The tax rate for 1929 was set at \$30. The three to four mile stretch of new state highway to be constructed between the Groton/Townsend line and Primehurst Railroad Bridge was scheduled for completion on August 16. \$15,000 was expected to be spent this year for work on Brookline Road. A six room house built on "your lot," was advertised at \$448 complete.

August - The Allen Bros. Wild West and Animal Show held a performance in Townsend, which included 18 mustangs, long horned steer, cowgirls, cowboys, indians and 15 head of wild animals from Mexico, India and Africa. The American Legion's Third Annual Field Day began at 12:05 a.m. with a midnight dance and fireworks display. Over 600 tickets were sold for the day long event. A fire resulting from the morning fireworks, however, caused the cancellation of an evening display.

September - The first Montachusett Regional Conference was held at Whalom Park on September 11, 1929, with 20 cities and towns from Massachusetts and New Hampshire represented. "Miss Townsend" was set to be chosen at the next Memorial Hall dance, with the winner being presented with a silver trophy.

October - Pilots of a biplane became confused in fog and landed on the Townsend Hill farm of Edgar Campbell. While attempting to continue their Boston to St. Louis flight, the plane struck the top of a tree and was badly wrecked. Among its goals for the coming

year, the Townsend Historical Society voted to find the proper location of the site of the first church in Townsend, the old school houses, and the location of the home of Eunice Locke. The Hart Free Library was dedicated on October 31, 1929.

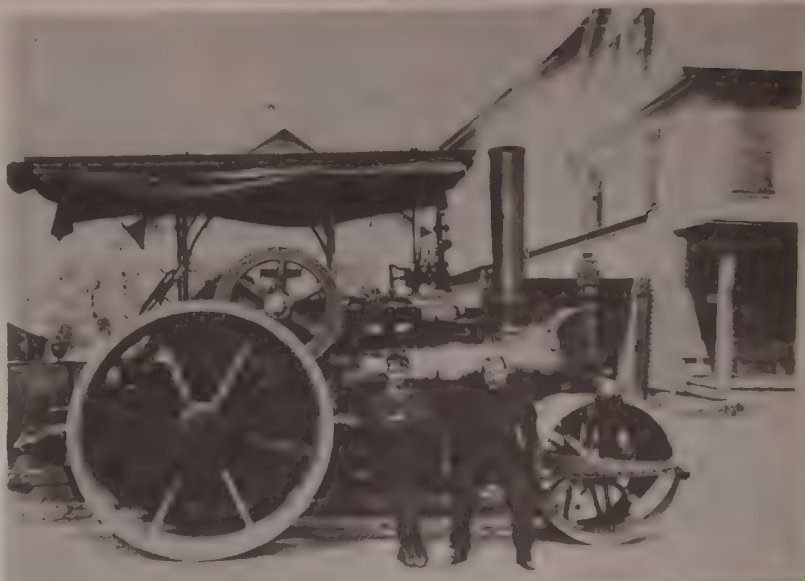
November - New Officers of the North Star Lodge I.O.O.F. were installed in Odd Fellows Hall. George Gilchrist was installed as Noble Grand. The Annual Red Cross membership drive began. President Hoover said, "Today the Red Cross has become the banner of mercy and of skillful protection from disasters of every kind." The B&M Sales Co., manufacturers of the Townsend Range Burners, showed rapid growth. The New England Fox Club held its Annual Fall Hunt at West Townsend with their headquarters in the West Townsend Inn.

December - The farm of Lyman Cook on Wallace Hill was lost in a spectacular fire, with an estimated loss of \$15,000. The blaze was thought to have been caused by a defective chimney with a lack of water responsible for the four hour duration of the blaze.

January - At a meeting of the Montachusett Regional Conference, needs of wider, straighter and better highways and rural electrification were discussed. "Where Prohibition is a Success," was the sermon topic at the Congregational Church.

February - Men's union suits were on sale at John J. Piper for 98 cents. The Townsend Minstrels put on a show at Memorial Hall, under the auspices of the Townsend Grange.

March - At the Annual Town Meeting, \$1100 was voted for a new truck at the Harbor Station, while \$800 was appropriated for new hose at the Center and West Townsend Stations. \$122 was voted for curbing and sidewalks at the common, \$200 for three plows, and \$300 for an upright piano at Memorial Hall. The meeting also voted to have a code of building laws drafted and to organize committees to study the



Road work...A road crew and equipment around the turn of the century.

town's lighting system and the possible construction of a new school.

April - Flowing paraffin, due to a faulty cutoff valve, came in contact with a hot branding iron at the Fessenden Co., causing the barrel of paraffin to explode. Clement Altmiller of Townsend and another worker were badly burned in the blaze. In a meeting of the Historical Society, means were discussed of obtaining and placing suitable markers at historical sites. The Townsend Band held a supper, concert and dance at Memorial Hall.

June - "Thou Shall Not Commit Adultery," was the message placed in the Townsend Times by Reverend Sherman Goodwin, and aimed at "the men who are playing with other men's wives." The Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Tent 38, held their regular meeting in Odd Fellow's Hall. The Townsend Red Cross and other town organizations raised \$60 for Nashua Red Cross relief. Townsend's first Tercentenary Observance was held on the site of the first Meeting House. The three Protestant churches met in an open air meeting on Meeting House Hill.

July - The Townsend Con-

gregational Church celebrated the 100th anniversary of the building of their church. Townsend Boy Scout Troop 10 held its annual sale of homemade food and candy. Vacation Bible School at the Congregational Church and Red Cross swimming lessons were available to Townsend children.

August - 73 year old Charlie A. Parker died in August from injuries received when he fell from a freight car near the Fessenden Co.'s plant, where he was employed for several years.

September - It was announced that Lowell's new \$350,000 post office was built using West Townsend "pink" granite, quarried by Duncan Rusk Co. of Townsend.

October - The Spaulding Brothers, former residents of Townsend Harbor, presented the New England Society for the Preservation of Antiques the old grist mill at the Harbor. The Townsend Historical Society was asked to appoint a committee to take over and make the arrangements necessary to preserve the building.

September - 73 year old George Wyman of West Townsend kept his promise and committed suicide, ending his life in

November, 1930, by hanging himself.

1931
January - The Spaulding Memorial School was donated to Townsend by Huntley N. and Rolland H. Spaulding, in memory of their parents, Jonas and Emma Spaulding, long time residents of Townsend Harbor. The "handsome, modern school house," fully furnished and complete with gymnasium equipment, was estimated to cost \$150,000. The town was only asked to supply the site. The gift was unanimously accepted at a Special Town Meeting in January.

February - In the State Primary, Townsend candidates for State representative, Earle S. Bagley and John Piper, lost to Dunstable candidate James Kendall. The Middlesex County tax rate increased from \$1.37 in 1930 to \$1.59 in 1931. For this increase, county residents will receive an increase in public works and improvements.

March - Principle arguments at the Annual Town Meeting involved an appropriation of \$499.01 to increase the lighting in town and to sand sidewalks. The presentation of ball grounds and

Continued on page 12

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Townsend in the Roaring Twenties

Continued from page 11

acceptance by the town of "Fessenden Field," completed the plans for the new Spaulding Memorial School and playground. The late John Birney Blood, veteran of the Civil War, left his estate to the town for the erection of a monument in memory of the soldiers of the Civil War. Amount of the estate was unspecified.

April - In preparation for the construction of Spaulding Memorial in April, the Dixon house and buildings located on the future school site, were sold at auction. The house went for \$8, barn \$1, shed 50 cents, and summer arbor \$3. A "new era" in the lighting of Townsend began with the addition of 15 new lights and the increase in candlepower of all existing lights.

May - A "pay supper" sponsored by the Red Cross was held in the Congregational Church vestry to fund summer swimming lessons for Townsend's children. The Congregational Church received two valuable gifts. The Hart Homestead, a brick home facing the common, was given to the church by Dr. Aubrey Hart of Boston, for use as a parsonage. Mrs. James Doane presented the church with a Memorial Porch to be erected on the front of the church at a cost of several thousand dollars.

June - The town was saddened with the loss of G.L. Whitcome in June, at the age of 76. Whitcome, who lived on Turnpike Road, was a native of Townsend and said to be, "one of the most prominent and public spirited citizens of Townsend." The 200th Anniversary Committee met to select various sub committees for the planning of Townsend's bicentennial. T.E. Flarity was selected Chairman.

July - A Townsend man was found guilty in July, of inexperience and negligence in the death of his four year old daughter whose passing resulted from an accident in the car her father was driving.

August - For the first time in history, a traffic officer was posted on Methodist Hill in August, to direct traffic congestion caused by the thousands that attended the Band Concert and

Lawn Party, sponsored by the American Legion. Reverend Waters called in an SOS to Police Chief Harry Felch because of a skunk who had taken up residence in the minister's cellar, causing havoc. Felch instructed Officer Hathaway to take care of the matter, but Hathaway declined. The outcome was not reported. The tax rate was set at \$25.40, a reduction of \$4.30. The valuation of Townsend increased from \$1,869,115 to \$2,415,124, an increase of 30 percent.

September - The Police Department requested additional

funding in September due primarily to an increase in auto accidents. The Doane Memorial Porch, in memory of Reverend David Palmer, minister of the Townsend Congregational Church from 1800 to 1830, was dedicated on September 20, 1931. The American Legion Auxiliary's performance of "Sweetheart Town," a musical comedy, was given at Memorial Hall and was well received.

October - A "Halloween Atrocity," was planned for the holiday window at the *Townsend Times* office, designed by printer

Dexter Appleford. The mysterious window is said to encompass the use of disinterred relics. The Townsend Grange conducted a circus at Memorial Hall which gave "pleasure to a good crowd."

November - A 63 acre fish hatchery was planned for low lands on the Jennison Farm on Lunenburg Road. Plans revealed in November called for creating a reservoir in the low lying areas.

December - The Farnsworth House on Main Street was destroyed by a fire which began in wall petitions near the chimney. The Fitchburg pumper was called

in to assist local firemen. An immunization clinic against diphtheria was offered by the Town Nurse, Board of Health, and school authorities. Many attended the December dedication of the Congregational Church Parsonage.

1932

January - The newly organized Town Citizens Club met to discuss a variety of town affairs and possible routes to "better government." \$140 was raised through Christmas Seal sales. The money was to fund "health work" in Townsend. Much discussion ensued upon finding fox traps baited with poison meat. Valuable local dogs were lost to the deadly bait.

February - T.E. Flarity, in his 39th year as Moderator, was called the "Dean of State Moderators." Townsend closed 1931 in good financial shape with \$4000 in unexpended funds. State funding increased from \$9000 to \$30,000 in the last ten year period. The finance committee recommended a 10 percent cut in all town budgets.

March - The March 1932 was one of the best attended Annual Town Meetings held to date, as voters turned out to cut their taxes. Appropriations were cut to approximately \$78,000, \$2000 less than in the previous year. The Townsend Grange celebrated its 40th Anniversary.

April - Townsend lost two of its prominent citizens, A. Dudley Bagley, Sr., 63, and Melvin Wood, 63. The chosen site for the Civil War Monument was the center triangle of the common. Fessenden Co. quoted the price of stove coal at \$15.65 per ton, with a one dollar discount for cash.

May - The cost of government was considered too high with 20 cents out of every dollar of "national income" required to fund federal, state and local government. The Civil War Monument was dedicated on Memorial Day, 1932.

June - The 200th Anniversary week was scheduled to begin June 26, with appropriate services at all churches. Events included pa-

rades, a Twilight Village League game and a Band Concert. The dedication of the Spaulding Memorial School took place on June 29, 1932. The Town Citizens Club asked for a statement of town budget figures, looking to determine the town's anticipated financial condition at the end of the year. Fire destroyed the Albert Wyman place.

August - In a released statement of town finances, total uncollected property taxes for 1930 equalled \$3,748.43 and for 1931, \$14,769.60. A Special Town Meeting was scheduled due to insufficient funding in the town's welfare fund. \$1500 in additional funds were appropriated. The tax rate was set at \$25.70.

September - A prohibition lecture was held at the Congregational church. Plans by the state got underway to make the Squannacook River public fishing territory.

October - George Arthur Wilder, past Post Master, State Legislator, Town Treasurer, and Town Clerk, passed away at 73. A Special Town Meeting authorized the school committee to establish vocational education. The Monday Club observed its 25th birthday.

November - The Asker Inn at Townsend Harbor was destroyed by fire. 819 Townsend voters out of 981 registered voted in the election for president, with Hoover receiving 609 to 169 for Roosevelt.

December - Town Club membership and activities continued to grow as out-of-towners were invited to join the group. Festive and joyous Christmas services were held in all of Townsend's churches.



The little engine that could...A train passes through Townsend on a day that is now little more than a memory.

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Townsend braves the Great Depression

1933
January - Attorney General Francis A. Johnson reopened the investigation of the death of Charles Stone Wheeler. Although the death was designated a suicide, Wheeler's housekeeper Hazel Oikelmus and farm laborer Rayno Kivola were questioned and the body was ordered exhumed. The home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Maki on Fitchburg Road in Townsend Harbor was completely destroyed by fire. The damage was estimated at \$6,000. Eight members of Thomas Lagasse's family were seriously injured when a car they were riding in veered off Lowell-Lawrence Boulevard in Methuen and crashed into a pole. The Townsend Town Club celebrated its hundredth anniversary. The *Townsend Times* announced a Short Story Contest. The prizes were \$1 for writers whose work earned publication and \$5 in gold for the story judged as best at the end of the year.

February - Individuals announced their candidacy for town positions. The Republican Town Committee elected officers.

March - Elected to town offices were Frederick J. Piper as Town Clerk, Earle S. Bagley, Francis N. Boutelle and Frederick J. Piper as Selectmen, Gertrude S. Copeland as Treasurer, Timothy E. Flarity as Moderator, George

R. Jaquith as Assessor, Charles W. Goodwin as Tax Collector, Eliza M. Bennett, Francis N. Boutelle and Frederick J. Piper to the Board of Public Welfare, Lila M. Hayward, Roswell A. Lancey and Marion B. Poor to the School Committee, William W. Copeland as Tree Warden, Richard S. Ely, Hollis Hathaway and Melora E. Proctor to the Board of Public Health, Thomas T. Goodwin as Cemetery Commissioner, Robert G. Fessenden as Park Commissioner, Fred M. Davis as Auditor, Carl B. Willard as Trustee of the Public Library and Richard S. Ely, Eva M. Ely and Clarence W. Sherwin as Trustees of the James N. Tucker Fund. Elected Constable was Harry C. Felch. There was a tie between Henry B. Hathaway and Howard B. Morse for the second Constable position, and in an election recount, Howard B. Morse voted in as Constable. Henry Hathaway was appointed to the position of Chief of Police. The town voted to cut the annual budget by \$11,000. Deputy Income Tax Collector and Townsend native Alden A. Sherwin was awarded the Purple Heart. Two break-ins occurred in West Townsend at C. C. Donley's General Store and the *Times* shop.

April - Jack Hassett, manager of the Brockelman Brothers Inc. Townsend store, was selected to open a new store in Lawrence. A



Where's the fire?...The West Townsend Fire Co., c. 1928, located at the corner of Main Street and New Fitchburg Road.

severe snowstorm on April 12 knocked out power and telephone service in Townsend. A car crash involving three vehicles on Main Street injured one person. High waters on the Squannacook River were expected for the opening of the fishing season. The Pheobe Weston Farmer Tent, No. 38 Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War celebrated its second anniversary. The Junior Girls organized a club.

May - Police Chief Henry B. Hathaway initiated a street safety drive. The Grange voted to purchase the old schoolhouse and convert it into club rooms. The North Star Lodge No. 144 100 FE of the E. A. Spaulding Rebekah lodges celebrated its 114 anniversary. The town held a May Day Parade.

June - Memorial Day exercises were a great success. Four Townsend youths were arraigned in Fitchburg Court for stealing gas from a steel drum in Lunenburg that belonged to Townsend resident Anne Nutting. Local mail delivery in town dropped from two cents to one cent. The Townsend Women's Club was formed. A cabaret called Chinaland opened. Plans for the first town celebration of the Fourth of July in ten years, the largest in Middlesex County, were announced.

July - Townsend voted to accept federal money for the installation of a water system. Fourth of July festivities were a great success. Fishing was prohibited along the Squannacook River after July 31. George Wyeth's home was destroyed by fire.

August - With federal funds, the state public works department announced plans to rebuild River Road from Townsend to Ashby Center via Sheldon Bridge. The Board of Selectmen adopted a new accounting system from the State Department of Accounts. A Special Town Meeting was planned for September 16 to act on building a Town Water Supply under the National Recovery Act. A special election was required to elect three Water Commissioners. The death of Frederick Piper required an election to fill the vacancies he left: Selectman, Town Clerk, Board of Public Welfare and Cemetery Commissioner. Theron C. Taylor of Ayer received a 30 day sentence for drunken driving that caused an accident in front of Spaulding's Sons' Leatherboard plant in Townsend Harbor. A Gypsy Moth airplane owned by resident Oscar Johnson was wrecked in a crash in Westboro. The pilot was injured. Two were injured in a car crash at the four corners on the country road between West Townsend and Mason. William H. Millington was elected to be Chairman of the National Recovery Act Committee.

September - The town voted in support of the water system. The cost was \$154,000. A National Recovery Act grant provided \$42,000. The remaining \$112,000 was obtained by government loan at a four percent interest rate.

October - Oscar B. Mudgett, Henry B. Bounton and Carl B. Willard were elected as Water Commissioners. Willard A. Greer was elected Selectman, Robert A. Copeland as Town Clerk, James Cook to the Board of Public Welfare and John Livingston to the Cemetery Commission. A burned and abandoned car found in a West Hill field was owned by Boston resident Harry Segal and found to have been burned for insurance purposes.

November - Townsend an-

nounced an examination for those interested in the position of Postmaster. Raymond B. Churchill, a mail truck driver, was arrested for driving while intoxicated in Townsend. The Grange elected officers. G. Rotundi & Son won the bid for the River Road contract.

December - \$167,000 to build the Ashby and Fitchburg Road was approved as a public works project. There were no injuries in a two car crash in Townsend. The Special Town Meeting approved \$2,000 for welfare purposes, \$300 for a snow plow, \$400 placed under special conditions and \$10,134 for a new engine for the town center water pumper, awarded to Waukasha Motor Company of Fitchburg.

1934
January - The Public Works Administration approved \$154,000 for the water project. Henry B. Hathaway died suddenly and Harry Felch was appointed Chief of Police by selectmen to replace him.

February - The temperature was measured at minus 18 degrees on February 9. The measurement was taken at the William T. MacMaster general store on Lunenburg Road. Activity in town stopped when a storm dropped 14 to 20 inches of snow. West Townsend resident and state road worker Norman Dodge was crushed to death by a truck. An explosion and resulting sparks and fire destroyed Fred Ross' home and injured his wife.

March - Among other items approved during the Annual Town Meeting were Sunday baseball, beer and wine sales, reinstatement of street lights from midnight to 1 a.m. and salary increases. The Board of Selectmen received an annual increase of \$175, from \$375 to \$550. The Board of Public Welfare's annual salary was raised to \$500. Re-elected were Robert A. Copeland as Town Clerk, William A. Greer and Francis N. Boutelle to the Board of Selectmen, Charles W. Goodwin as Tax Collector, Timothy E. Flarity as Moderator, William W. Copeland as Tree Warden, Eliza M. Bennett and Francis N. Boutelle to the Board

of Public Welfare, Richard S. Ely, Hollis Hathaway and Melora Proctor to the Board of Public Health and Howard B. Morse as Constable. Other officials elected were Assessor Joseph Arlin, School Committee members Hattie M. Davis and Ellen M. Whitcomb, Constable Richard A. Keefe, Trustee of the Public Library Evelyn L. Warren, Cemetery Commissioner Abbott C. Hodgman and Park Commissioner John J. Piper. Three applicants to the Postmaster position were deemed qualified and Robert E. Smith was nominated. The town purchased a one and one-half ton fire truck.

April - A grass fire burned five acres in Townsend Harbor. 19 hours of rain caused high waters that washed out the bridge near Makela's Pond. A Special Town Meeting was called on the water works project to give the town authorization to borrow funds from a source other than the federal government if a lower interest rate could be located.

May - State Forester Samuel A. York banned fires outdoors because of the persistence of small fires. The Woman's Club elected officers. Robert E. Smith assumed the duties of Postmaster. The census figures showed that Townsend's unemployment rate was 22.2 percent. Townsend, Fitchburg and State Police found auto parts believed stolen from the Colonel Beacon storehouse in Fitchburg in a car that was abandoned in Townsend. The Townsend Police were selected to escort President Franklin D. Roosevelt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt at the graduation of their son, John Roosevelt, from the Groton School in Groton.

June - The water works project began. Donald Domina and Ralph Colby were injured in a car crash in Townsend. Plans for the Fourth of July celebration were announced. After killing his father and receiving a life sentence due to insanity, resident Gilbert Richards committed suicide at Worcester State Hospital.

July - One person died and two were recovering from a car accident at the foot of Morgan Hill. Augustus Rosse of J. Long & Son

was accused of unfair practices on the water project. The town appropriated \$750 to continue the ERA project at Hillside Cemetery.

August - A wind accompanying an electrical hail storm on July 31 blew out 30 window panes at the Methodist Church and knocked out power for two hours. The police stepped up their war against reckless driving in town. Clyde Stetson of Townsend Harbor was struck by an auto and suffered a fractured skull, a compound leg fracture and lacerations.

September - The Willard Brook wall was washed out by rain. A woman dubbed "Nellie Bly" caused a scandal when she sued Richard Powell for breach of promise. Townsend's oldest resident, Asa Kendall Tyler, died at age 93. Mrs. Robert A. Copeland was injured in a car accident in Concord. Gaspar Bacon won the republican gubernatorial primary in Townsend.

October - The Congregational Church celebrated its 200th anniversary. Richard T. Lilly, the republican gubernatorial candidate, spoke in town.

November - Townsend voted for Gaspar Bacon for governor in the election. Sale of hard liquor remained illegal, but the sale of beer and wine was approved. The federal government bought 2500 acres on West Hill on the Brookline, New Hampshire state line. The standpipe was completed and tested on the water project. Albert Gilman was killed in a two car collision.

December - Sanitary Engineering Company opened. The side street mains and the center main were completed on the water project, but the digging machine stripped its gears trying to dig into frozen ground. Old time baseball player John Joseph Morse died at the age of 76.

1935
January - Townsend was among the towns to vote for the permanent organization of the Nashoba Health Unit. The Townsend Plan meeting was announced.

February - Individuals announced their candidacy for offices. The town was one candidate short for School Committee. A sticker campaign for the vacant School Committee seat was held after the filing period closed.

March - In town elections, Harry A. Morrison won the School Committee seat by four votes. Also elected were Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Selectmen Francis N. Boutelle, Willard A. Greer and George H. Hartford, Treasurer William H. Millington, Moderator Timothy E. Flarity, Assessor Walter D. Farrar, Tax Collector Charles W. Goodwin, Tree Warden William W. Copeland, Board of Public Welfare members Clement J. Altmiller, Francis N. Boutelle, Lilla M. Seaver, Cornelius P. Keefe and Harry A. Morrison, Board of Public Health members Richard S. Ely and Hollis Hathaway, Constables Richard A. Keefe and Howard B. Morse, Trustee of the Public Library Robert G. Fessenden, Park Com-

Continued on page 14



Spaulding Memorial...Spaulding Memorial School, donated to the town by Rolland and Huntley Spaulding, in memory of their parents, Jonas and Emmeline.

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Townsend braves the Depression

Continued from page 13

missioner Roswell A. Lancy, Cemetery Commissioner John W. Livingston, Trustees of the James N. Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely and Eva M. Ely and Water Commissioner Richard A. Keefe. The town appropriated \$90,736.89. Blasting Townsend Hill ledge was a Federal Environmental Relief Act project.

April - The tax rate increased \$7.40 to \$34.70. The Historical Society held its annual meeting.

May - A 75 acre fire near Vinton Pond girls camp required 300 fire fighters. State property and Emery Wyman's property was damaged. A Jenney gas station opened on the corner of Main and Depot Streets. Richard Keefe was appointed Water Superintendent. Mrs. Thomas M. Huskie was injured in a Fitchburg car crash. The town celebrated Memorial Day.

June - Civilian Conservation Corps camps began in town. West Townsend resident Max Hertel suffered a concussion and abrasions when his car drove off the road. A fatal car crash killed one and injured five.

July - According to the census, Townsend's population was 1,942. Townsend's oldest Civil War Veteran, Thomas Welch, died at the age of 91. Two car crashes occurred in town. There were no injuries. The Gem, formerly the Townsend Food Shop, opened. Rumors of graft on the water project brought federal agents town.

August - A federal grand jury under Assistant U. S. Attorney General J. B. Cartier indicted Joseph Long, Jr. on payroll graft. Long's father said that it was a set-up. The water works project was completed. An Elm Street barn was charred in a fire believed to have been set. West Townsend resident Clayton Tumber was killed in a hit and run accident. A car accident in town seriously injured Larry Shea of Lowell. The state announced the project to widen the road in the center of town. West Townsend resident Angus M. Baldwin died of typhoid. No other cases were reported. The Civilian Conservation Corps camps waited for state authority to begin improving the Willard Brook road. Goods worth \$175 were stolen from E. G. Fessenden's garage.

September - The first time the fire hydrant was used, it stopped a blaze in Clement cottage. Former Townsend resident Rowland Haynes was named president of Municipal University in Omaha, Nebraska. Howard Morse's truck backfired in his barn. The sparks set the hay on fire, but it was quickly extinguished. Residents Charles Lasko and Mattie Makela were injured in a car crash.

October - The Fessenden Company cut wages by ten percent to avoid closing.

November - Tax Collector Charles W. Goodwin voluntarily confessed a shortage in the town's accounts to District Attorney Warren A. Bishop. A trial was set for December 2 and Goodwin was released on \$5,000 bond. An Open House was held at the remodeled fire station. The Juvenile Grange elected officers.

December - The Goodwin case was returned to the grand jury and Goodwin was sentenced to three to five years of hard labor at Charleston State Prison. He had taken over \$15,000 of town funds and lost the money gambling on



The rains came...A flood washed out the Old Adams Dam in 1936. A new dam was built in 1949.

horses. Clement J. Altmiller was elected Tax Collector.

1936

January - The final figure of funds mishandled by Goodwin reached \$18,000. Goodwin was bonded and the Great American Indemnity Company paid the town \$9,700. Goodwin owned two homes in town valued at \$4,800 and the town warranted his arrest and seized the property before the insurance company could. Work on the Farm to Market Road project began under state WPA funds. The town sought a federal grant of \$22,000 for a waterworks project. The Civilian Conservation Corps camps broke up. Harry Hotaling and his family were driven from their home by a midnight blaze. Damage was estimated at \$1,000. A car flipped on Lunenburg Road. There were no injuries. The fire hydrant was knocked out by a hit and run accident at Brookline Street and Meadow Road, halting the water supply for 18 hours. Damage from a snow storm with high winds was estimated at \$2,500. The Congregational Church held its annual meeting.

February - Few individuals announced candidacy for town office and the town was short one candidate for School Committee. The WPA changed workers' pay schedules from semi-monthly to weekly.

March - Elected to town officers were Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Selectmen Francis N. Boutelle, Willard A. Greer and George H. Hartford, Treasurer William H. Millington, Moderator Timothy Flarity, Assessor Benjamin P. Poor, Tax Collector Clement J. Altmiller, Tree Warden William W. Copeland and Board of Public Welfare members Clement J. Altmiller, Lilla M. Seaver and Francis N. Boutelle. Moderator Timothy Flarity broke the gavel trying to keep order at the town meeting as appropriations rose over \$98,000. Heavy rain and melting snow caused flood conditions that washed out roads and bridges. Damages were estimated at \$100,000 and the schools were closed for almost two weeks.

April - Board of Health Chairman Dr. Richard S. Ely announced

ed that residents could drink Nashoba and state water. Two minor fires with little damage were reported in town. The primary election was held on April 28.

May - A Special Town Meeting was held on May 26 on the flood damage. The town voted \$2,500 for repairs. The tax rate rose from \$34.70 to \$37. The town observed Memorial Day. The First Baptist Church and the Woman's Club held annual meetings.

June - The Harbor Mill dam that was washed out during the flooding was rebuilt. Resident William J. Domina was missing for two days. He walked to Francistown, New Hampshire and was found there. Clarence King's barn burned killing a cow, a heifer and a horse. The origin of the fire was unknown.

July - A national straw vote ballot was held. Candidates were Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Republican Alfred M. Landon, Union Party representative William Lemke, Socialist Party representative Norman Thomas, Prohibition Party representative D. Leigh Colvin and Communist Earl Brauder. Axel West and Claus Gustafson were charged with violations of internal liquor tax laws on their sale of liquor when two of their stills were found. Edward Colby's stolen car was recovered.

August - Roosevelt led in the straw vote ballot for one week and Landon led for the next three weeks. Resident Dennis J. Coffey was killed by a train in New London, Connecticut.

September - Resident Ray P. Brown designed a protector against creosote in working against gypsy moths. S. A. Woods General Store closed.

October - Costs for the water takers remained close to the original estimate. Hope Davidson was injured in a car accident. The American Legion elected officers.

November - Alf Landon took the presidential vote in Townsend, beating President Roosevelt 716 to 226 and Pepperell Selectman Otto B. Olsen was elected as 12th Middlesex District state representative. West Townsend truckman Max Hertel continued to improve from a gunshot wound through the

chest he received while hunting at Pittsborough, New Hampshire. Icy roads caused an accident when a farm truck skidded into a tree between the Whiting farm and A. G. Porter's. None of the chickens were hurt, but the truck was wrecked. The Townsend Health Committee was organized. The Red Cross invited people to join the People's Red Cross.

December - Hertel, wounded by a gunshot, was released from the hospital. Residents petitioned Congress to enact the Townsend National Recovery Plan for a pension not to exceed \$200 a month for all residents over the age of 60. Turnout was low for the Special Town Meeting on December 29 to transfer funds from one town department to another. The employees of the Howe Lumber Company were granted a 10 percent raise. One of the poles at the Townsend Water Department pumping station, loosened by a heavy rain and snowstorm, gave way and fell across the road causing two accidents. Frank D. Farley was injured when he was struck by a truck on the Main Street bridge. A well child conference was held, sponsored by the Nashoba Board of Health.

1937

January - The Board of Engineers reelected Harry C. Felch to the position of Fire Chief. Selectmen voted to close Howard Street from 3 to 6 p.m. daily for children to enjoy coasting. Squannicook Poultry Plant in West Townsend installed a new incubator with a 16,000 egg capacity. Pauline B. Cowdrey, 23, died of cerebral spinal meningitis at Burbank Hospital. William J. Creighton injured his back when he fell from a carpenter's horse at the Fessenden Company. Francis N. Boutelle and his wife were injured when their car skidded on an icy road in Groton. Dense fog was the cause of a severe accident in West Townsend. The Congregational Church elected officers.

February - Balloting for town officers was moved to the lower level of Memorial Hall. Candidates began to file nomination papers and Moderator Timothy E. Flarity announced that he would not seek reelection following 44 years of service in the position. Francis N. Boutelle also announced that he would not seek reelection.

March - Elected to town offices were Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Selectmen Earle S. Bagley, Willard A. Greer and Hollis Hathaway, Treasurer William H. Millington, Moderator A. Dudley Bagley, Jr., Assessor Joseph R. Arlin, Tax Collector Clement J. Altmiller, Tree Warden William W. Copeland, Board of Public Welfare Francis N. Boutelle, Clare F. Creighton and Lilla M. Seaver, School Committee members Hattie M. Davis and Ellen M. Whitcomb, Board of Health members Richard S. Ely, Melora E. Proctor and Lester R. Spofford, Constables Richard A. Keefe and Howard B. Morse, Trustee of the Public Library Evelyn L. Warren, Park Commissioner John J. Piper, Cemetery Commissioner Abbott C. Hodgmen, Trustees of the James H. Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely, Eva M. Ely and Clarence W. Sherwin and Water Commissioners Hamilton R. Bailey and Hollis Hathaway. Moderator

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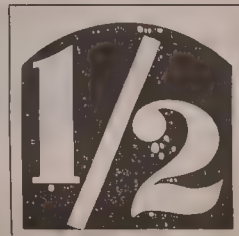
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Good thing they didn't want aluminum siding...Red brick 16-sided house on Main Street.

Continued on page 15

Townsend emerges from the Depression

Continued from page 14

Timothy E. Flarity was unable to preside at his last meeting because he was ill. He was presented, in absentia, a gavel with the Town Moderator emblem on it. A new bureau of old age assistance was formed by the selectmen.

Contracts for rebuilding the bridge at Townsend Harbor were reviewed. Employees of the tube shop at the Fessenden Companies' plant held a sit down strike for a 10 percent increase in pay. The strike was successful. Fire damaged the Park Hotel and threatened *The Times Free Press* office. Damage to the hotel was estimated at \$3,000. A 14 month old child, daughter of Floyd Wright, died of meningitis.

April - Townsend Water Department Superintendent Richard Keefe said that he expected enough water customers to bring the system to a break-even level. George Sweeney burned to death in a fire at a West Townsend Camp on Mason Road. Stephen Farrar's barn on Upper Main Street was destroyed and two houses next to the barn were badly damaged by a fire fought by three fire companies. A West Townsend youth, Edward H. Noel, 18, pled guilty to charges of larceny of an automobile. A truck and a car were damaged in an accident on Lunenburg Road. Townsend's oldest resident, Beniah H. Savage, passed his driver's license test. He was 90 at the time.

May - A Special Town Meeting on May 28 was called for the Harbor Bridge project. The project was to replace a bridge washed out in the 1936 flood. A wood fire destroyed 40 acres on the road from the Harbor to Cape Corner. Park Hotel proprietor Frank R. Dudley announced his plans to alter the hotel and property. A truck belonging to W. F. Beale of Brookline, New Hampshire caught fire on Brookline Road. It was announced that the Townsend telephone exchange would undergo changes and that a new dialing system would be installed. The Fire Department arranged new alarm signals for Townsend.

June - The town voted to take by eminent domain or purchase any land in Townsend Harbor necessary for the construction of a bridge on Warren Road over the Squannicook River at the Special Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen granted a permit for the sale of gasoline to the owners of Center Service Station. The tax rate was reduced \$3.40 to \$33.60. Spaulding Memorial School was looted by vandals. Doors to the

school were drilled open and damages were estimated at \$200. Work was completed on the West Townsend Cemetery water project. Blasting at the Civilian Conservation Corps camp in West Townsend knocked out power in Milford, New Hampshire. The death of John McInnis of West Townsend began rumors of foul play. A police investigation confirmed that McInnis died of a cerebral hemorrhage. A reception was held for the 100th birthday of Townsend's oldest resident, Mary Fidelia Barber. Townsend resident Richard Ross received an eye injury working at Hollingsworth and Vose in West Groton. West Townsend resident Julius Jasberg was injured in a car accident in Fitchburg.

July - The Board of Selectmen put the Harbor bridge contract out to bid again. Antonio Pandiscio of Fitchburg was the low bidder at \$17,834.10. The Pandiscio Company bid was confirmed by officials in Washington, D.C. The Fire Department responded to an alarm for a fire in two freight cars. The fire was believed to have been caused by fire crackers. The home of John Ordway in Townsend Harbor burned. The fire was believed to have been caused by spontaneous combustion and caused an estimated damage of \$3,500. Seven car accidents were reported in a one week period. There were no serious injuries. The series of accidents caused Selectman Earle S. Bagley to call for more action against speeders.

August - The State Highway Department placed white lines on Route 119.

September - Work began on the Harbor bridge project. A bad curve on Fitchburg Road was widened after an accident involving four cars. State Registrar of Motor Vehicles Frank A. Goodwin said that driving 45 miles per hour constituted overdriving a car's headlights. The Selectmen issued regulations that required rubbish disposal in the town dump be made as far into the site as possible. The Civilian Conservation Corps won the state wood sawing title. Increased business at the Jenney Service Station required the installation of larger gasoline storage tanks.

October - *The Times Free Press* was foreclosed by the new owner Elbridge G. Cann, a former partner in the organization, following a default on the mortgage. State and local police raided the home of Thomas Lagasse and seized beer, wine and a half



Bird's eye view...This shot from the Methodist Church tower was taken by R.A. Lancey around 1892.

pint of spirituous liquor. A still was brewing in the home at the time of the raid. Vandals wrecked a gas shovel owned by Antonio Pandiscio of Fitchburg to delay progress on the Harbor Bridge. Real estate of unknown value, paintings by artist Winslow Homer and two trust funds in the amount of \$10,000 each were bequeathed to the town in the will of Martha E. Homer. Townsend resident Vera Sullivan was granted a divorce from Edward Sullivan.

November - The Federal Unemployment Census was taken at the Post Office. The completion date of the Harbor Bridge contract was announced as May 21, 1938. A 50 foot high crane used on the project toppled over. Governor Charles E. Hurley and Maine Governor Lewis O. Barrows visited the Boynton family of West Townsend. A new telephone system was installed that replaced turning the crank to signal the operator with a modern switchboard connection. The Associated Hospital Service of Boston announced an annual treatment plan that provided for 21 day hospitalization at a cost of \$10 to local residents. An accident on Route 13 involving a car and a horse drawn dump cart carrying cider flooded the road with apple cider. Athol furniture manufacturer George Beals landed his Waco monoplane at a Harbor farm. Residents of Townsend signed a petition to ban horse and dog racing.

December - Work on the Harbor Bridge stopped for Thanksgiving and did not resume until December 2. The Board of Selectmen appointed Eneas C. Morgan Cemetery Commissioner to complete the term of T. Turner Goodwin, who died suddenly in November. The School Committee considered the purchase of a movie projector for Spaulding Memorial High School. The Spaulding Fiber Company distributed almost \$1,000 in bonuses to its employees. A fire caused by rats and matches gutted the home of Richard Ross. A fire destroyed the large tool shed of John Wiik of Townsend Harbor. The shed and its contents were valued at over \$1,000. Early winter was so warm that crocus bloomed in Brookline, New Hampshire, violets were seen in Fitchburg, and a bouquet of locally blooming dandelions was brought to the *Times Free Press*

office. Townsend's oldest resident Mary Fidelia Barber termed the telephone "a great invention." Mr. and Mrs. Timothy E. Flarity celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

1938

January - Two Works Project Administration employees were suspended for painting a dog with creosote. Albert Tessier and Betty Goff of Fitchburg were arrested for disturbing the peace. Fire believed to have been caused by a flare up in an oil heater gutted the barber shop of Rouy Cowdrey in the Packard block on Main Street. Five individuals were appointed by the Board of Selectmen to replace four fire fighters and the Fire Chief because of contradictory instructions while fighting the barber shop fire. Harry C. Felch was then unanimously re-elected to the position of chief. Plans to revise the financing and administration of State and Town Relief included a sales tax. Mason resident Carleton F. Farrar rescued Townsend resident Bobbie Gould, 5, when the child slipped into the ice at Bigsby's Pond. Two individuals were struck by a car while walking on Main Street. Neither was seriously injured. Townsend Harbor thermometers registered temperatures of -12 to -18 degrees Fahrenheit on January 11 and 12 and -38 degrees Fahrenheit on January 19. Summer resident Rowland Haynes was elected president of the University of Omaha in Nebraska.

February - The Harbor bridge opened to traffic. Rouy Cowdrey reopened his barber shop. Candidates for town offices began picking up nomination papers. Seventeen voters were added to the voting list, bringing the total of registered voters in the town to 1,062. Townsend resident Kenneth E. Terrell, 17, was killed when he was struck in the head by a log that fell off of a tractor while working for his employer, Mervin W. Wares. A fire that destroyed the brooder house belonging to Andrew Lemieux of West Townsend killed 300 chickens. The Townsend Band started planning for its 100th anniversary.

March - The town voted to raise and appropriate \$103,721.35. Fire fighters received an increase in salary from \$830 to \$1,135 to provide insurance for injuries sustained fighting a fire. Attorney Earle S. Bagley announced that the Park Hotel

would be torn down. Townsend Harbor resident Martin Wiks wrecked his car when he fell asleep at the wheel. Cyrus Lane of Townsend Harbor bequeathed \$14,500 to the Congregational Church. District Conservation Officer Herbert Peaseley of Leominster released 1,000 trout in the Squannicook between West Townsend and Harbor Pond announced that 1,000 more would be released later in the month.

April - Cutting a swath from one half to two miles wide and five miles long, a forest fire swept the Civilian Conservation Corps camp on West Hill to the ski tow in Brookline, NH. The fire burned almost 2,000 acres and an estimated crew of 1,000 fire fighters from 12 surrounding towns fought to bring the blaze under control. Two acres of land burned near Dudley Road next to the Squannicook River. A blast from Pandiscio's equipment threw a three foot log into the air that crashed into Art Ball's Shell Station in Townsend Harbor when it fell. Officer Ira D. Carleton acted as a convoy to Brockelman trucks from the Lunenburg to the Pepperell lines because the trucks were driven by nonunion personnel. Company drivers were on strike and the strike was settled later in the month.

May - Fire Chief Harry Felch and his deputies reviewed the claims submitted for damages from the Townsend-Brookline fire. Some claims were completely rejected and others were cut up to one half. Felch saved about \$50 on the fire costs. Donald Battin held a transmission test from Townsend radio station W1KYH on Main Street. The station opened in December 1937. Urban V. Bolliwer and Garnet Rafuse were both found guilty of operating an automobile under the influence of liquor in Ayer District Court. Bolliwer was fined \$100 and Rafuse was fined \$50. An 18 month old German Shepherd owned by Mr. and Mrs. Thatcher Rich of West Townsend was sent to the Seeing Eye School in Morristown, New Jersey.

June - Pay for fighting the Townsend-Brookline fire was issued. The total amount was \$490. Townsend highway workers were given an increase from 40 to 50 cents per hour. Republican gubernatorial candidate Leverett Saltonstall spoke in Townsend. Ivan Hills of Fitchburg Road, an employee of the

Fessenden Companies, nearly severed his left arm when he came into contact with a moving fan. Edward S. Zarozinski and Gladys Zarozinski of Gardner were injured in a two car collision at the junction of Routes 119 and 13. A Civilian Conservation Corps truck operated by Elbert G. Mulley collided with a car operated by Hazel G. Bryne of Brookline at the intersection of Elm and Main Streets in West Townsend. In an unrelated incident, a Civilian Conservation Corps truck overturned, injuring 11. Under the direction of Police Chief Howard B. Morse, officers stopped 43 cars as part of an auto check-up drive. The A to Z Gift Shoppe opened in the A. D. Barber house on Turnpike Road. Six organizations contributed to placing a drinking fountain on the Common.

July - The Townsend Band opened its one hundredth season at the Fourth of July Festivities. A birthday party followed on July 22 and 23. Festivities included a parade, two baseball games, bicycle races, a tug-of-war, volleyball and ping pong exhibitions and two band concerts. The July 21 issue of the *Townsend Times* was the Band Anniversary Issue. Poor weather did not dampen the celebration and the estimate was that 3,000 attended. Corinne Hamel was injured when she was struck by a car driven by Nelson D. Blanch of Greenville, NH.

August - Chairman of the Emergency Finance Board Theodore A. Wardell announced that Townsend's allocation to repair flood damage was \$7,000. Governor Charles F. Hurley signed a measure distributing five million dollars in highway funds to cities and towns for work relief. Townsend received \$1,900. The Finance Committee voted to advance \$500 additional funds from the reserve fund to the Welfare Department. Brookline Street residents submitted a petition to the Board of Selectmen asking the town to stop motorists from speeding on the road. Francis X. Bumpus and Charles O. Wall, both of Dorchester, were arraigned in Ayer District Court for operating improperly registered motor vehicles in Townsend. Lightning struck the home of Francis N. Boutelle and caused \$2,000 damage. Wires were knocked down, traffic stopped and trees damaged when a poplar tree near John Wright's residence at the corner of Brookline and Water Streets was blown down in a high wind. The *Townsend Times* introduced a weekly magazine section. Pastor of the West Townsend Baptist Church Rev. Francis S. Bernauer was bitten by a dog. Dog Officer Howard L. Doran ordered the dog restrained. A dog owned by Edward Hale bit Clifford Montague's son.

September - Townsend experienced heavy hurricane damage in a storm that cut electric power, flattened the backstop and grandstand at Fessenden Field, ripped trees from their roots, knocked over chimneys, and blew off roofs. Highways were closed and telephone service was disconnected. Fitchburg Gas & Electric Company went to work to repair the damaged lines and loans were available through State Director of the Federal Housing Administration John F. Malley under the provisions of Title I of the National Housing Act. In another storm, lightning struck an open field in Townsend Harbor and caused a grass fire. Registered voters in Townsend rose by 26. New England Stores proprietor Leon H. Ballou purchased the property on Main Street known as the Packard block. An eight acre

Continued on page 16

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Vivien Leigh

Clark Gable

The war approaches—

Continued from page 15

field owned by the Fessenden Companies was devoured by army worms. A woman pickpocket stole \$70 from Amos Jodrey of West Townsend. A car driven by David E. Gallant of Manchester, New Hampshire was damaged when it collided with the rear of a truck owned by John Robichaud of Brookline Street. Patricia Holmes, four years old, was injured when she was struck by a car driven by Gustaaba Lindberg.

October - Loans were made available through The Disaster Loan Corporation and The Farm Security Corporation to offset the damage of the storm. Apples blown off of trees were purchased by the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation. A total of 62 voters were added to the lists, bringing the total of registered voters in Townsend to 1,142. A fire at the home of Henry H. Barlow, Proctor Road caused no serious damage. Austin Boliver of upper Main Street was injured when he fell from staging replacing shingles on a home on School

Street.

November - Gov. Leverett Saltonstall took Townsend by a large percentage in the gubernatorial race. Rouy Cowdrey's barber shop and the Gem lunch were threatened by a fire that was averted. The West Townsend home of Otto Gustafson on Mason Road was destroyed by fire. Lester Fravel of Stoneham, enrolled at the Civilian Conservation Corps camp in West Townsend, admitted starting fires at the Methodist Church and the Grange Hall. The LeGay family dog, Rex, jumped on the couple's bed and barked furiously until they woke up because of a fire in the home. The home was completely destroyed, and the dog perished in the flames. A spark from a freight train started a small grass fire beside the tracks near Turnpike Road. Sparks from the chimney of a house owned by Matti Johnson caused damage of about \$500. Sparks from a chimney also started a fire in the home of Mrs. Henry Miller on Depot Street. A town fire hydrant was broken by



Little white schoolhouse...Schoolhouse No. 12, one of 13 schools that operated in Townsend until around 1912.

workers of the Works Project Administration repairing hurricane damage. Raymond Chadwick, 17, of Attleboro was injured when he spun off the road on Route 13 into a tree. Chadwick was also fined \$20 for taking and driving West Townsend resident Fred Dwinell's car when the accident occurred. Resident Elbridge Weir was placed under arrest and charged with larceny of a car belonging to Pepperell resident Edward Brooks. He was fined \$50 in Ayer District Court. Four Civilian Conservation Corps trucks froze and burst their engine blocks and heads due to the cold weather. Damage was estimated

at \$1,600 to \$2,000. A demonstration of grading logs from trees felled by the hurricane was held at Fessenden Companies.

December - Bradford S. Hubbard, *Times-Free Press* editor, escaped injury in a car crash in Pepperell. John Archambault, formerly of Pepperell, won \$567 in a verdict of false arrest against Pepperell Tax Collector Ray M. Newell and Frederick J. Wright, deputy collector. Spaulding Fibre Company distributed bonus checks to its employees. The Baumis-Warford Company, Inc., manufacturer of heavy-duty ten-wheeler trucks, opened a plant on

Main Street in West Townsend. Board of Selectmen Chairman Earle S. Bagley again closed Highland Street for coasting. A Special Town Meeting was called for December 30 to appropriate funds for a new Fire Department hose. Boston resident Joseph S. Tonsizk was found guilty of larceny of property from CCC camp in West Townsend in Ayer District Court. Frank Wornham pled not guilty to charges of operating under the influence of liquor in Fitchburg District Court. The case was continued. Two Brookline, New Hampshire residents were injured in a car crash on Brookline Road. The Fire Department received two calls for chimney fires.

1939

January - The Special Town Meeting saved taxpayers \$5,000 to \$6,000 on taxes from the Surplus Revenue for 1938. The Fessenden Companies sustained \$200 of damage from a fire at the pump house. Edward Reeves saved Mrs. Walter Leonard from possible drowning when she fell through the ice on the Squannicook River. Temperatures sank to -12 Fahrenheit.

February - Farm hand John Ahti, 65, employed by Henry Maki at Cape Corner, committed suicide by hanging. Individuals announced candidacy for town offices. Races heated up for Selectman, Water Commissioner and Constable. Twelve additional voters were registered. Harry C. Felch was reappointed as Chief of

the Fire Department. Three acres of land were scorched by a fire between the Fessenden Companies and the home of Robert G. Fessenden. West Townsend fire fighter Frank Farnsworth, 85, retired from the fire department after serving the town for 59 years. A fire destroyed a chicken brood house owned by Frank Levanti in West Townsend. Sylvia Omquist was hospitalized with an injured knee after a skiing accident. Temperatures of -12 Fahrenheit were recorded on February 2.

March - Ten people arrived at 11 a.m. for the Annual Town Meeting. By 1:30 p.m., about 20 percent of the town's 1,134 voters were present. The town raised and appropriated \$107,272 for 1939. Elected to town office were Moderator A. Dudley Bagley, Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Selectmen Willard A. Greer, Earle S. Bagley and Hollis Hathaway, Town Treasurer William H. Millington, Tax Collector Clement J. Althier, Constables Howard B. Morse and Richard A. Keefe, Board of Public Welfare members Clare F. Creighton, Francis N. Boutelle and Lilla A. Seaver, Assessor Benjamin P. Poor, Water Commissioners Ira D. Carlton and Louis Welch, School Committee members Roswell A. Lancy, Bertha Rich and Ruth M. Marshall, Library Trustee Carl B. Willard, Board of Health members Richard S. Ely, Melora E. Proctor and Lester R. Spofford, Cemetery Commissioner Eneas C. Morgan, Trustees of the James A. Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely, Eva M. Ely and Clarence W. Sherwin, Tree Warden William W. Copeland, and Park Commissioner Robert G. Fessenden. Howard B. Morse was appointed Chief of Police by the Board of Selectmen. He continued his drive against car operators who failed to observe town traffic regulations. According to the Town Accountant, the average weekly wage for Townsend workers was \$12 to \$15. Up to 16 inches of snow fell during a storm on March 12 and 13. Fire Warden Harry Felch banned open air fires without a permit. A bungalow owned by Rachel Bell in West Townsend was razed by fire believed to have been caused by a defective oil stove. A two car collision occurred at the intersection of Main and Elm Streets. There were no serious injuries.

April - Chief of Police Howard B. Morse summoned four drivers to Ayer District Court for violating driving regulations of Townsend. Three were fined. Proprietor of Ormsby's Filling Station David B. Ormsby announced that he was appointed as an authorized dealer for Plymouth and Chrysler automobiles. The state ordered a ban on all open air fire permits. Fish worms were substituted for goldfish in the Townsend swallowing contests. The fishing season began with 2,650 new trout placed in the Squannicook River and Bixby and Mason Ponds.

May - Spaulding Memorial School was broken into and cash as well as canned goods were taken. Plans were announced for a new backdrop at Fessenden Field to replace the one demolished by the hurricane in September 1938. The First Baptist Church of West Townsend announced plans for extensive improvements. Townsend's oldest resident Mary Fidelia Barbara passed away at the age of 101. Former Civilian Conservation Corps enrollee Wilfred Martel, 22, was fined \$100 and sentenced to two months in the house of correction in Fitchburg District Court for operating under the influence of liquor and leaving the scene of an accident. The sentence was suspended. The home of Emil Johnson on Bayberry Hill was destroyed by fire. Damage was estimated at \$3,000. The home and farm buildings of Konsta Maki on Bayberry Hill just over the Lunenburg town line were destroyed by fire. Livestock was killed and the damage was estimated at \$3,000. The Elm Street brooder house owned by William T. MacMaster burned killing 119 chickens. Two small grass fires were reported near the railroad tracks and at the home of George Gilchrist. Lucille Davis, 10, was injured in a car accident in West Townsend. Three were fined in Ayer District Court for motor vehicle violations. Among them was Charles R. Shattuck of Pepperell, who Police Chief Howard B. Morse clocked driving at 75 miles per hour.

June - Resident Julius Jasberg failed an attempt of suicide while at the Fitchburg Police Station where he was being held on a



All steamed up...The first steam fire engine in Townsend, the 1875 Amoskeag.

Townsend Times—Thursday, January 19, 1939

People and Spots in the Late News



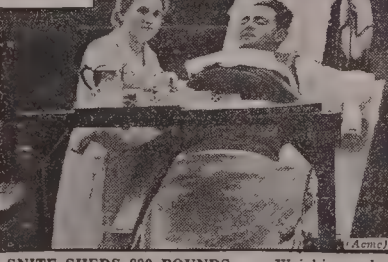
IN LINE OF DUTY... A few seconds before General Viscount Gort, chief of imperial staff, would have passed him, Gentleman Cadet A. J. Wildy fell in dead faint during inspection at Royal Military Academy, Britain's "West Point", near Woolwich. Gen. Gort may be seen approaching between files.



HEADLOCK TO WEDLOCK... Culminating "romance of Titans" that began when they were paired in golf meet year ago, George Zaharias, professional wrestler, and Mildred "Babe" Didrickson, famed Olympic star, were coupled for life by St. Louis, Mo., justice of the peace.



YOUNGEST AND OLDEST members, as 76th Congress convened in Washington, were Rep. Lindley Beckworth, 25, of Texas, starting his first term, and Rep. Edward T. Taylor, 80, of Colorado, chairman of house appropriations committee, starting his sixteenth term.



SNITE SHEDS 890 POUNDS... Weighing only 9 1/2 pounds, new respirator of aluminum, strong lightweight metal used in surgical braces, gave Frederick B. Snite, Jr., young Chicago paralysis victim, freedom of legs denied by former full-length "iron lung" which weighed 900 pounds. He may now even travel by airplane.



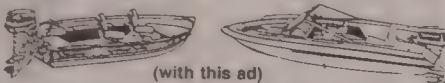
MINT'S PIE FOR THEM... Scaling wall, Paul Francis (left) and William Gallagher, 15, San Francisco orphans, entered \$1,000,000, "impregnable" armor-plated, heavily-guarded U. S. mint (below), took copper sheet for proof, then told authorities and were captured. They were released when federal men, asking their suggestions for guarding mint, received answer: "Lock the windows."



Two small grass fires were reported near the railroad tracks and at the home of George Gilchrist. Lucille Davis, 10, was injured in a car accident in West Townsend. Three were fined in Ayer District Court for motor vehicle violations. Among them was Charles R. Shattuck of Pepperell, who Police Chief Howard B. Morse clocked driving at 75 miles per hour.

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Continued on page 17

The war years approach

Continued from page 16

charge of drunkenness. Police investigated two reported break-ins in West Townsend. Six water moosehairs were killed at the Rusk Brothers quarries in West Townsend. West Townsend resident Edward N. Jodrey was one of the early divers who attempted to raise the submarine Squalus in Portsmouth, NH. Twenty-six people died when the submarine sank. Sixth grade Spaulding Memorial School student Ernest Knox sustained injuries when he was struck by a car as he chased a ball and ran onto Turnpike Road to retrieve it. Resident Harold Connors drove his car off of Mason Road and into a stone wall. He was not injured. Albert J. Kastrich, 41, of Allston was fined \$35 in Ayer District Court on a charge of driving in Townsend while under the influence of liquor. A brush fire was reported and extinguished at the town dump. State Conservation Officer Herbert C. Peaslee announced that the Harbor Pond was stocked with 1,500 yellow perch. Mr. and Mrs. Walter D. Farrar celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Resident Mary E. Hildreth turned a Welsh linen tablecloth over to a private party from Bangor, Wales, British Isles. The tablecloth dated back to 1824. The Townsend Band ordered new uniforms.

July - As a cost saving measure, the telephone was removed from the fire department. The Rusk Brothers quarries in West Townsend was selected as a stone supplier for the Enfield Dam. Water Commissioners asked that sprinklers be turned off when the fire whistle blew because of the drought and the low water pressure for fighting fires. Fire caused by lightning completely destroyed a barn and its contents belonging to Abbot Hodgman on Elm Street. Harry Hotelling reported the theft of a tire, tube and wheel from his car. A car driven by James N. Poor was damaged when it collided with a truck operated by Harry H. Tzizik of Harvard on Main Street. Ruth Speth of Brooklyn, New York was found guilty of failing to obey a stop sign in Townsend and was fined \$2 in Ayer District Court.

August - The tax rate was set at \$31.60, \$2 less than 1938. Resident Francis J. Beauregard, 22, was arrested on a warrant charging him with assault on a 10 year old girl. He was held on \$5,000 bond. Harold W. Bonnalie, 31, was found guilty on a complaint charging him with non-support of minor children in Fitchburg District Court. He was ordered to pay \$10 per week and placed on probation for one year. Lightning struck the Damon & Richards mill in West Townsend and started a fire that was put out before much damage was done. Brush fires were set at the town dump in three separate piles of brush. Six year old Allie Conner was rescued from drowning in the Squannicook River by Richard C. Liddell, 16. Resident Miles C. Upham was injured in a two car accident in Shrewsbury. Barbara Gauthier was struck while crossing the street in front of the West Townsend Tavern. She suffered a fractured ankle and bruises. Four people were injured in a two car collision on Fitchburg Road. A 60 year old elm tree was removed by

the state from in front of Rouy Cowdrey's barber shop.

September - The old cooper shop at the Harbor, transformed into "The Cooperage" by Mr. and Mrs. F. Ellison Leland and Emerson Lamb, opened. Mary L. Hamm of Pittsfield sustained injuries when the car she was riding in collided with a car operated by Nellie I. Colwell of Killingly, Connecticut at the junction of Routes 119 and 13.

October - Edward Sherlaw of the District Attorney's office came to Townsend to try to solve the \$2,585 robbery that took place at the home of Albert Jensen. Fire fighters extinguished four mysterious brush fires and one chimney fire during one weekend.

November - Halloween pranksters managed to do mischief despite the rain of the holiday. Lieut. Alfred J. Lloyd, 35, terrorized West Townsend for a night by brandishing a rifle at area residents. A fire believed started by sparks from an incinerator burned about an acre of grassland owned by Albert Jennings.

December - A Special Town Meeting was called for December 30.

Grieving for his wife and the despondency of ill health were believed to be the cause suicide, by revolver committed, by 80 year old Daniel T. Spofford. A committee was formed for raising relief funds for war-stricken Finland. The committee collected \$400 during its first week. The figure rose to \$525 during the second week. There were several accidents on slippery roads in Townsend due to a snowfall, but no injuries were reported. A 65 foot flag pole with a revolving top and gilded dome was erected in Gilson Park. Six Townsend hunters reported killing deer during the open season. A Milford, NH resident was injured when he was crushed by a 400 pound piece of stone at the Rusk Brothers quarries. The Spaulding Fibre Company gave employees bonus checks. A greenhouse belonging to Fred Surtette of Townsend Harbor was destroyed by fire. The estimated loss was \$500. Four other fires were reported in the same week.

1940

January - Appropriations from surplus revenue were made at the Special Town Meeting. The army draft called for 17 more men, bringing the area total to 37. The Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation again purchased surplus apples from local growers. The Coop Farmers' dance net \$65 of relief funds for Finland. The Woman's Club telegraphed Senators Henry Cabot Lodge and David I. Walsh and asked that the United States send financial aid to Finland. Patrick L. Sullivan was charged and found guilty of failing to support his wife and four minor children. He was fined \$200, ordered to make \$10 weekly payments and received a suspended one year sentence in Ayer District Court. Townsend Harbor Postmaster Arthur Clarence Josselyn announced his retirement effective February 1. He served in that position for 38 years. Earle "Hap" Brown lost an index finger as a result of catching it in a chain stove conveyor at the Fessenden Companies. A

mysterious signal at the telephone office brought the discovery of a fire at the Fessenden Companies. A second fire broke out one week later. It was believed that a furnace was responsible for both fires. A chimney fire was extinguished at the home of Austin Smith. Three other chimney fires were also reported. Resident William J. Vallette was elected treasurer of the Tech Engineering News undergraduate engineering magazine of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

February - Twelve new voters were added to the registered voters list. Townsend Harbor residents sought a water main extension. Individuals announced their candidacy for town offices. The Finnish relief fund reached \$864. The sum of \$30.90 was collected at a movie sponsored by the Townsend Coop. The apple purchase program was continued until March 1. Members of the Townsend Rod and Gun Club went on record approving the humane trap law. A new Post Office opened in Townsend Harbor under Postmistress Mary F. Smith. Engineer Vincent J. Vallette and bank president Carl B. Willard were named to "Who's Who in Massachusetts." The home of Ada Clark in West Townsend sustained damage estimated at \$2,500 from a fire. George Powers, a Fessenden Companies employee, was severely burned when he fell asleep while smoking a cigarette in his cabin. He was hospitalized at Burbank Hospital in Fitchburg. A fire destroyed the home of John Lampinen in West Townsend. Townsend fire fighters asked for payment during their first hour of service at a structure fire. Three cars skidded and crashed due to sleet and ice on the roads.

March - Elected to town offices were Selectmen Louis S. Josselyn, Willard Greer and Hollis Hathaway. School Committee members Ruth Marshall, Nellie M. Whitcomb and Roger W. Sherwin. Department of Public Welfare members Clare F. Creighton, Francis N. Boutelle and Dorothy B. Keefe. Moderator A. Dudley Bagley, Jr., Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Treasurer William H. Millington, Tax Collector Clement J. Altiller, Tree Warden William W. Copeland, Constables Richard A. Keefe and Howard B. Morse. Board of Health members Richard S. Ely, Melora E. Proctor and Lester R. Spofford. Trustee of the Public Library Evelyn L. Warren, Park Commissioner John J. Piper, Cemetery Commissioner Abbott C. Hodgman, Water Commissioner Hollis Hathaway and Trustees of the James H. Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely, Eva M. Ely and Clarence Sherwin. Articles restoring the fire department to 33 members and making payment to fire fighters from the time they reported to the fire station passed. The town also approved the humane trap law. Individuals and organizations in town continued to contribute to the Finnish relief fund. Three fire fighters were added to the West Townsend fire company. Examinations were announced to fill a postmaster position at the Harbor Post Office. Mary Smith was the only applicant. Townsend's "Pot-O-Gold" night was discontinued as a result

of District Attorney Robert A. Bradford's campaign against lotteries. Nillo Reutinen, 20, an employee of Peter Peterson was taken into custody by the U. S. Department of Labor division of immigration on a charge of unlawful entry into the United States.

April - The Fessenden Companies' warehouse on Depot Street burned, causing estimated damage of \$5,000 to \$10,000. 18 names were added to the list of registered voters, bringing the town's total to 1,124. The police recovered a car stolen from Fitchburg. Two nonagenarians observed birthdays, Ella Will and Arthur E. Burt were both 90. The presidential primary was held on April 30.

May - Voter turn out was low for the primary. Gov. Leverett Saltonstall was favored three-to-one over William H. MacMasters. Arthur Morin, 32, of Nashua, New Hampshire lost his forefinger in an accident with a saw at the Fessenden Companies. Individuals and organizations in town continued to contribute to the Finnish relief fund. Proceeds from a fund-raising costume party amounted to \$112.32. Diphtheria immunization clinics were held. The Gilson Park flag pole was dedicated on May 30. A combination barn and hen house belonging to Edward Mattson in West Townsend was destroyed by fire and 400 hens perished. Damage was estimated at \$2,500. Combustion started a small fire at the town dump and a second fire was reported the next week. The Josselyn's store in Townsend Harbor closed after 38 years. Mrs. Robert Misner sustained minor injuries in a car accident. Mr. and Mrs. Erhardt Schatz of Dorchester sustained injuries when their car collided with a telephone pole in West Townsend. Both were hospitalized. Cars operated by Charles Tumioli of New York City and Marion E. Fields of Manchester, New Hampshire collided at Tenney's corner.

June - The enlistment quota for Middlesex County to the regular army was set at 126, according to Boston Army Base Major General



Old Home Day...The town turns out for an Old Home Day celebration around the turn of the century.

James A. Woodruff. The preliminary census figures set Townsend's population at 2,058. District Attorney Robert F. Bradford called a meeting of 54 Chiefs of Police to block Fifth Column and anti-American activities in Middlesex County. The town experienced a blackout for about half an hour when a fuse burned out in a transformer at Fessenden Companies. Chester Hale discovered a stolen car in the woods off of South Row.

July - Covered in the meeting called by District Attorney Robert F. Bradford were keeping watch on suspicious activities, coordinating reports on those activities and proceeding through the court system under existing laws. Supervisor of the Farm Security Administration Cloyes T. Gleason

announced that the Farm Tenant Purchase Program would operate beginning July 1. The program enabled deserving farm tenants, share renters and farm laborers to buy farms of their own. Col. Wilford A. Walker of the State Adjutant General's office spoke at a meeting of the Civilian Defense committees of Middlesex County. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt approved a bill authorizing the payment of \$1,500 to George I. Sheldon for injuries and property damage caused by collision of his truck and a car registered to the state geological survey on August 10, 1937. The Fourth of July celebration included music, pony rides, a tea, a children's doll carriage parade, supper and a band concert. John

Continued on page 18

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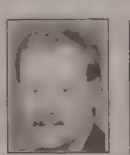
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But can you paint it with a roller?...This wooden 16-sided house on Main Street in West Townsend is the home of Elsie Lowe.

The draft blows across Townsend

Continued from page 17

H. Walker swerved to avoid a dog and side-swiped a fire hydrant in Townsend.

August - Registration began for resident aliens 14 years of age and older. Sixteen names were added to the voter registration list. A call was put out for homes for refugee children, ages five to 10, from Great Britain. Tools and a typewriter were stolen from the Baumis-Warford plant in West Townsend. The value of the missing items was about \$400. The typewriter was recovered from a Worcester pawn shop. Three youths, two from Fitchburg and one from Leominster, were held for grand jury on \$250 bond for break-ins in Ashby and Townsend. Fessenden Companies' employee Walter Beaubien of Brookline, New Hampshire lost part of his finger as a result of getting caught in a cutting saw at the company. The home of Edward Burke in Townsend Harbor was destroyed by fire. The Fire Department answered three calls in one week.

September - Gov. Leverett Saltonstall named Groton as headquarters for the area selective service draft. Paul A. Dever and Francis E. Kelly were on the Democratic ticket for the gubernatorial primary race and Saltonstall was on Republican ticket. Successful in the republican primary were Robert T. Bushnell for Attorney General, Charles P. Howard for County Treasurer and Nathaniel I. Bowditch and Archie R. Giroux for County Commissioner. William P. Robbins sustained injuries when his car was in a head-on collision with a car driven by Robert Benchley, Jr., the son of actor Robert Benchley. Mrs. Fred G. Rist of Athol was injured when the front tire of her car blew and she crashed into a pole in West Townsend. Townsend's oldest resident Francilla Spaulding Whitney, died.

October - Local officials received instructions for administering the draft registration scheduled October 16, 192 were registered. The Area 74 Draft Board released a list of 3,114 draftees from the towns of Ashby, Groton, Townsend, Pepperell,

Dunstable, Chelmsford, Westford, Shirley, Tyngsboro and Littleton. The Townsend Red Cross announced plans to sew 500 dresses for English babies. Seventeen names were added to the registered voters list, raising the total to 1,193. Plans for a National Youth Administration project serving school lunches at Spaulding Memorial School were announced. An air drill and a large 3-4 inch chain were reported missing from Rusk Brothers quarries.

November - Townsend selected Wilkie over Roosevelt in the presidential race and Saltonstall was favored in the gubernatorial race. In accordance with the Selective Service Law, Advisory Boards were created for the purpose of advising draftees in draft form preparation. Three local men, all volunteers, were inducted in the Army. The annual drive of the Townsend Branch of the American Red Cross collected \$250, \$40 over its quota. Treasurer William H. Millington received a check of \$6,761.17 from the state for annual tax settlement between the state and the town. West Townsend resident Edward L. Goulding committed suicide by motor vehicle exhaust gas and was found in the car that was parked near Townsend Road in North Shirley. The National Youth Administration project began. The first storm of the winter dropped over a foot of snow.

December - The town conducted a recount on the gubernatorial race. Saltonstall remained the winner. State Director of Selective Service Maj. Gen. Edward C. Erickson announced that 11 men would be drafted from Draft Area 74. Joseph P. Ermola of West Townsend was the first resident drafted. The Townsend Legionnaires announced that they would participate in airplane observation tests in cooperation with the National Defense Committee in January. The combined efforts of the American Legion and the Auxiliary produced ten cartons of clothing that weighed 500 pounds. The clothes were sent to Britain. A Special Town Meeting was held on December 27. Fessenden Companies' employees received a ten

percent raise. Spaulding Fibre Company distributed annual Christmas bonuses. Tauno Tyrkko caught his finger in the stove planner and tore the flesh and chipped the bone while working at Fessenden Companies. Beniah H. Savage, holder of the Boston Post cane as Townsend's oldest male resident, celebrated his 94th birthday.

1941
January - Legion members and volunteer civilian observers began aircraft observation exercises. Townsend Legionnaires saw movies of the Russian invasion of Finland and the German invasion of Norway and France. Nillo Rautinen received official word that he could remain in the United States. Additional jobs opened for the National Youth Administration project at Spaulding Memorial School. Dog Officer Arthur B. Borneman reported 184 dog complaints in 1940. Two car accidents were reported as a result of icy roads. Defective wiring caused \$3,000 of damage to the homes of Hector Martel and Martin Wiik in Townsend Harbor. Townsend resident Grace Nies Fletcher, contributor to the *Saturday Evening Post*, broke her leg in a skiing accident.

February - Harry C. Felch was reappointed Chief of the Fire Department. Army headquarters announced a call for 9,100 through the selective service boards of the state. Estimates were that 54 would be from the local area, but only 17 were selected. Individuals announced their candidacy for town offices. Thirteen names were added to the registered voters list. Spaulding Fibre Company announced payment of a \$100 bonus to drafted employees. 37 veterans of the World War registered for the Legionnaires' national defense effort.

March - Elected to town officers were Treasurer William H. Millington, Constables Howard B. Morse and Richard A. Keefe, Cemetery Commissioner Ralph T. Kilbourn, Moderator A. Dudley Bagley, Jr., Selectmen Hollis Hathaway, Louis S. Josselyn and Stephen W. Keefe, Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Tax Collec-



Stately Fessenden manor...Workmen pose in front of the A.L. Fessenden residence, finished in 1898.

tor Clemente J. Altmiller, Tree Warden Walker D. Farrar, Board of Health members Richard S. Ely, Henry S. Bailey and Melora E. Proctor, Board of Public Welfare members Francis N. Boutelle, Clare F. Creighton and Dorothy B. Keefe, School Committee members Roy E. Brown and Harry A. Morrison, Trustee of the Public Library Robert G. Fessenden, Park Commissioners William T. MacMaster and Robert A. Copeland, Water Commissioner Hamilton R. Bailey and Trustees of the James H. Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely, Eva M. Ely and Oscar B. Mudgett. Townsend approved salary raises for officials. Residents of the town expressed strong objections to Emory L. Wyman's petition for a license to sell gas at the corner of Brookline and Main Streets. The license was issued. The U. S. Army asked Townsend land owners for trespass rights for maneuvers and the Townsend State Forest Reservation was taken over by the 1st Howitzer Division for a machine gun and artillery range.

April - Postmaster General Frank C. Walker announced that United States Defense Savings Bonds and Postal Savings Stamps would go on sale May 1. State Fire Warden M. C. Hutchins announced that all open air burning permits were discontinued until June 8. The announcement was followed later in the month by a statement from Lieutenant Governor Horace T. Cahill closing all state woodlands because of fire hazards. Townsend's first traffic

light was installed at the corner of Main and Elm Streets, the junction of Routes 119 and 13. The tax rate fell to \$28.60. Francis N. Boutelle was reelected as president of the Historical Society. A new Post Office was under construction in Townsend Harbor. Diphtheria clinics were conducted. A dance at the Grange Hall raised \$74.60 for the Finnish relief fund. Joseph Poitras, Rose Poitras and Joseph Poitras, Jr. were injured when their car left the road, struck a tree and turned on end on Dudley Road.

May - Defense stamps and new issue Savings Bonds went on sale at the Center Post Office. Gov. Leverett Saltonstall approved a bill to allow farm trucks to operate on the highway for a half mile between parts of the same farm without registration. The executive committee to head the organization of the Civilian Defense for Townsend was announced by Veterans Administration Chairman Fletcher. The Committee for Public Safety appointed three committees for the Home Defense Program. Willard A. Greer was appointed as Chief Air Raid Warden. The Park Commissioners announced plans to move the bandstand nearer to the center of the common and work was begun later in the month. Lineman Donald Chalmers of Fitchburg suffered third-degree burns and shock working on the project. He was hospitalized at Burbank Hospital in Fitchburg. Walter Leppanens, 11 year old son of Walter Leppanens, died tragically from burns suffered in a

fire that destroyed the Leppanens' home. The Grange held a dance that raised \$65 for the family. Three fires set within fifteen minutes on Turnpike Road were labeled "deliberate" by Fire Chief Harry Felch. The West Townsend Civilian Conservation Corps camp disbanded. The new Harbor Post Office opened.

June - Mrs. Pat Beauchamp Washington, a British nurse from London, England, spoke at a meeting of the Civilian Defense on June 5. She told residents that German children were taught to spy on their parents; everyone in England was allowed only 2 ounces of butter a week and motorists got only 6 gallons of gas a month; it was only four minutes by plane from France to England; political enemies of Hitler were tortured and shot or clubbed to death; Polish children were fighting by filling bottles with gas and throwing them at German tanks; Hess' nephew was in the U. S. Army in Panama; there were 750,000 volunteer women workers in Great Britain; a fine of \$25 to \$50 was imposed after the third warning of a light showing during blackouts and that people in England had suitcases packed in the front hall to enable a quick flight to a bomb shelter. The Draft Board announced inductees for July and scheduled the second registration in Groton for July 1. A fire broke out at the Fessenden Companies and was quickly extinguished.

July - Draft Registration in Groton brought out 160 new
Continued on page 19

Happy Birthday Townsend Times



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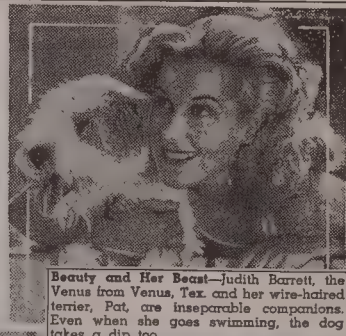
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Since 1919

Townsend Times—Thursday, January 26, 1939



A Free Man Again—The bitter cup of 22 years in San Quentin prison becomes sweeter as Tom Mooney once again sips his morning coffee in luxurious leisure. He is shown here with his lawyer, George T. Davis, reading some of the thousands of congratulatory messages.



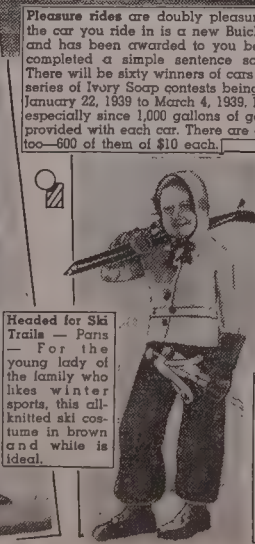
Beauty and Her Beast—Judith Barrett, the Venus from Venus, Tex. and her wire-haired terrier, Pat, are inseparable companions. Even when she goes swimming, the dog takes a dip too.



Pleasure rides are doubly pleasurable when the car you ride in is a new Buick "Special" and has been awarded to you because you completed a simple sentence satisfactorily. There will be sixty winners of cars in the new series of Ivory Soap contests being held from January 22, 1939 to March 4, 1939. Nice going, especially since 1,000 gallons of gasoline are provided with each car. There are cash prizes too—600 of them of \$10 each.



One of Hollywood's Chosen—Sheila Darcy, of York, Pa., who was chosen by Hollywood as one of its ten leading beauties.



Headed for Ski Trails—Paris—for the young lady who likes winter sports, this knitted ski costume in brown and white is ideal.



Radio Veteran's Success Story—Radio personalities come and go and are soon forgotten, but the Voice of Experience's amazingly consistent growth in popularity continues to astonish the radio fraternity. It was over one station that the Voice took to the airways in 1922; now heard over 87 stations, he will soon be heard over one hundred stations in the U.S. and Canada, the largest network to ever carry a program of this kind. A tribute indeed to one of radio's best-known veterans of the crystal set days...remember?

World War II

Continued from page 18

selectees. An aluminum drive was held from July 21 through July 29 and netted 835 pounds. Robert E. Smith was appointed chairman of the Defense Savings Committee. 34 emergency kits were completed by the Townsend Branch of Bundles for Britain. The kits contained razors, tooth brushes, tooth paste, soap, combs and hairpins. A course in Defense Gardening was offered through Civil Defense. Employees of the Fessenden Companies received a raise of five cents per hour. Two accidents at the Fessenden Companies were reported. One involved Townsend resident Donald Weir, who was pinned against a wall between two cars of staves. He suffered contusions and abrasions. The car driven by Lawrence Conner went out of control, hit a tree and straddled a stone fence on Townsend Street in Pepperell. June Young, 14, was injured when the car she was riding in collided with a truck on Park street.

August - The Army sought to increase the land area available for maneuvers. A plane observation post was established on top of Bayberry Hill. Dr. Albert J. Atwood bequeathed money to Townsend's poor. Robert Sullivan, 23, was found guilty of pulling a false fire alarm and was fined \$3 in Ayer District Court. A charge of drunkenness was also filed. 25 more emergency kits were made. A 20 hour search recovered the body of 8 year old Thomas Whaley. Thomas Whaley was missing and found drowned at the dam on the Squannacook River at Bridge Street. David Manning Proctor, 15, died from internal injuries caused when he was thrown from a tractor. Gas wholesalers announced a cut of about 10 percent in deliveries in August. Two more fires were set in the woods off of Turnpike Road.

September - Army maneuvers brought 40,000 men through town and a boon to Townsend businesses. Gas dealers received their September quotas, which were cut by 15 percent of July's figures. Resident Arthur M. Fleming, Jr. pled guilty to charges of selling a live raccoon. He was fined \$50 in Ayer District Court. The Townsend Center pumper was disabled

by a foreign substance going through the pump and jamming the rotors while pumping water to fight a series of suspicious brush fires. Townsend announced plans to hold an Air Raid Precautions School in October. Another brush fire scorched about 10 acres near the Rusk Brothers quarries in West Townsend.

October - The Civilian Conservation Corps camp in West Townsend housed 200 British sailors. C.L. Webster's store in West Townsend was broken into and a large quantity of cigarettes and men's socks were stolen. The value of the goods was estimated at \$50. Postmaster Robert E. Smith announced a steady increase in bond sales. Another brush fire burned one and a half acres on Bayberry Hill.

November - It was announced that 27 from Area 74 would be called for pre-induction physicals in December. The Townsend Defense Committee was reorganized and Arthur Koykka was named head of the Air Raid Wardenship. Plans to start the Townsend Air Raid Precaution School in January were announced. Three ambulance squads were organized. Five soldiers and two civilians were arrested in connection with the theft and disposal of Army goods. The Fessenden Companies mill was threatened when fire broke out in the pipes and raged from the cellar to the third floor. Thomas Lagasse was given six months' probation when he was found guilty driving under the influence of liquor. Three children were injured when they raced down Bayberry Hill on a bicycle and hit the Fred Ballou house on Fitchburg Road. Several people were injured in a series of car accidents in town. Four were hospitalized.

December - All of Townsend's defense began when war was declared.

Lydia DeRoth, who was air raid warden in London, England during the blitz and became involved with the headquarters of The Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety, spoke in Townsend. The Lowell Navy recruiting station announced that a recruiting officer would be stationed at the Townsend Center Post Office

every Monday. Townsend received its final check for the year for taxes from the state, bringing the total to \$22,770.28. Voters did not pass an article calling for the purchase of a two-way radio for the police at the Special Town Meeting. Spaulding Fibre Company announced a \$50 Christmas bonus for employees.

1942
January - The Board of Selectmen appointed a Tire Rationing Board. The Lieutenant Governor called for 35 men to qualify Townsend's Company for the State Guard. The medical division of civilian defense announced its plans to equip a complete Mobile First Aid Unit. Arthur P. Bliss, former Police Chief of Needham, was appointed to replace Police Chief Howard B. Morse, who had resigned. A car accident between Fessenden Company's President Stanley B. Fessenden and a Boston attorney left Herbert Hotelling, a passenger in Fessenden's car, injured. A comparison of sales slips showed that grocery prices were lower than they had been between 1918 and 1920. West Townsend resident George Chaffee sustained injuries when his car was struck and destroyed in a collision with a car driven by Thomas Murray.

February - The third registration under the Selective Service Act of 1940 on February 15 and 16 registered 99. There were no contests for town offices and four candidates sought election to a vacant constable position. Thirty-three people were added to the registered voters list. The Townsend Times changed its format to a tabloid on February 19 in accordance with the paper conservation program. Harry C. Felch was reappointed as Chief of the Fire Department. The Mobile First Aid Unit was fully equipped. Nashua, NH, resident Albert A. Gagnon was injured when his car skidded and crashed into a tree. Mark B. Gould and Clinton Abbott of West Townsend sustained injuries when a car driven by Gould collided with a parked truck.

March - The town appropriated \$106,908.96 at the Annual Town Meeting. Ira D. Carleton won the sticker contest for Constable. Relected to town offices were

Moderator A. Dudley Bagley, Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Treasurer William H. Millington, Tax Collector Clement J. Altmiller, Selectmen Stephen A. Keefe, Louis Josselyn and Hollis Hathaway, Assessor Benjamin Poor, Board of Public Welfare members Dorothy Keefe, Clare Creighton and Francis N. Boutelle, Constable Richard A. Keefe, School Committee members Roswell A. Lancy and Earle S. Bagley, Library Trustee Carl B. Willard, Park Commissioner Robert G. Fessenden, Water Commissioner Ira D. Carleton, Cemetery Commissioner Eneas C. Morgan, Trustees of the Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely, Oscar B. Mudgett and Eva M. Ely and Tree Warden William W. Copeland. The town held a test blackout for half an hour on March 25. It was a success except for one house. The Board of Selectmen began to study the need for bus service between Townsend and Fitchburg. Townsend gas merchants agreed to suspend gas sales on Sundays.

April - The fourth Selective Service draft estimated that 260 between the ages of 45 and 65 registered. As of April 10, 74 Townsend residents were serving in the Armed Forces. Chief Air Raid Warden Arthur P. Bliss and Deputy Warden Ira Carleton investigated the first report of a bombing. There were no signs that one was dropped. Registration for sugar rationing was announced. The State Guard formed a reservist section. The tax rate was set at \$27.60. The Townsend Times resumed publishing on a broadsheet. Fessenden Companies employee William Robbins broke his leg while working on the logways. In one weekend, the Fire Department responded to five fires. Townsend resident Elmer G. Dudley was arrested and placed in local lock-up to appear in District Court. He was charged with driving under the influence of liquor.

May - Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones announced that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation would purchase both new and used tires. Sugar rationing registration ended with 2,068 registered. Gas rationing registration began with 566 ration cards distributed. Bus service between Townsend and Fitchburg began on May 18. Two more trips on the route were added later in the month. Lorden Ice Company of Pepperell bought the ice business and truck of Townsend resident James Cook. The Fire Department responded to two small fires. A brush fire started by a broken electric wire threatened the home of Police Chief Arthur P. Bliss.

June - NBC's "Truth or Consequences" radio program, usually broadcast from New York, brought equipment to the home of Daniel A. Doyle in West Townsend for a single broadcast of the show. Mrs. Doyle, who appeared on the show in New York earlier in the month, missed one of the questions. She had to suffer the "consequence" of hosting a broadcast in her home. Martha Scott, star of the movie "Our Town," made a guest appearance on the show. Townsend Memorial Hall was open to register all men



More fun than a barrel full of...This wooden barrel rack was made by William Stewart for the Fessenden Co.

between 18 and 20 for the Selective Service. A shipment of federal fish added 5,600 fingerling brook trout in Witch Brook and 5,700 in the Town Farm and Walker Brooks. Young Billy Bailey of Brookline Street was saved from drowning by Frank Sullivan of School Street. Robert Ylitalo of Munsonville, NH, was fined \$15 in Ayer District Court for assault on Police Officer Ira D. Carleton. Ylitalo was also fined \$50 for driving under the influence of liquor. Fitchburg resident Agenor O. Basselait was arrested for driving under the influence of liquor. Two Nashua residents were injured when the car they were riding in collided with a car driven by Townsend resident David Grey on Route 13 at the intersection of Bayberry Hill and Fitchburg Roads.

July - Thirty-five men between 18 and 20 registered for the Selective Service. Registration for permanent rationing began. Earle S. Bagley announced his candidacy for Republican State Representative. Townsend held another successful blackout. Kitchen fats and greases were added to the official salvage program. The Local War Price and Rationing Boards added new adult bicycles to rationed items. Fessenden Companies employee Allison E. Gagnon, Sr. was injured when the team of horses he was driving ran away and threw him against a tree. A fire destroyed the Depot Street Extension home of Walter Leonard. A car driven by Townsend resident William H. Greenough crashed into the rear of a Fitchburg & Leominster

Street Railway bus. The driver of the bus chased the vehicle and caught the driver in a dead end street. West Townsend resident Richard S. Doyle was fined \$3 in Ayer District Court when he pled guilty to a charge of operating a car without a license. Two men, George Aro and Russell Hayward, both of West Townsend, lost fingers operating a homemade engine cutter. Winchendon resident David Bartlett was injured when the car he was driving crashed against a pole and trees in West Townsend. There was another fire at the town dump.

August - Five children in a family of eight residing in Townsend required hospitalization resulting from neglect, malnutrition and rickets. A formal complaint was filed in Ayer District Court.

September - Earle S. Bagley won the Republican nomination for State Representative. Townsend Committee on Salvage Chairman William H. Wing announced plans for a scrap drive. Resignations of 20 plane spotters required a call for more volunteers.

October - Gov. Leverett Saltonstall appointed Hollis Hathaway, Republican, and James F. Smith, Democrat, as election supervisors for the state election. It was the first time in the recollection of town officials that a state election was supervised. In October, 121 Townsend residents were in the armed forces. Fuel oil rationing began. There were 538 oil burners in use in Townsend. Fessenden Companies employees

Continued on page 20



Bridge over Townsend waters...The bridge on Canal Street in West Townsend.

Townsend Times - Thursday, January 26, 1939

NewsOddities . . . by Squier



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TITLEIST HOGAN

World War II in Townsend

Continued from page 19

received a five percent raise. An explosion at the Baumis-Warford, Inc. plant injured six. A new observation post and control center was constructed. The Harbor Post Office moved.

November - In the election, Townsend defeated, by 25 votes, package liquor stores, and defeated dog and horse racing by a substantial margin. A birth control question was supported by the town. Gas coupon holders had to re-register. Fuel oil users took a 15 to 50 percent cut in rations over the previous year. The new observation post opened. Principal of Townsend High School Hamilton R. Bailey resigned to accept a position at Orange High School. Two Townsend women took auto mechanics training at Fort Devens. Three year old Judy Morse, daughter of former Police Chief Howard B. Morse, was found after a seven hour search employing 250 people. She had wandered 2½ miles from her home. Two Townsend youths were fined \$5 each in Ayer District Court for the Halloween mischief of ringing the church bells.

December - The Selective Service Act was amended to ensure that individuals over 45 would not be inducted without consent. Townsend resident Donald Weir survived the sinking of the *Joseph Hewes*, a transport ship that was torpedoed by an Axis U-boat off the north African coast. He returned to town to tell the tale. The sixth registration of Selective Service was held from December 11-31. New coal and oil heaters were rationed. Oil supplies fell perilously low. All gas sales were frozen. A War Emergency Certificate was issued by the State Department of Public Utilities to George A. Myhaver doing business as Granite Stages to operate buses between Ashby and Boston, including stops in Townsend. The Townsend-Fitchburg line added two more buses on Saturdays. The town received 35 applications for the principal's position. J. Verne Quimby was selected. Due to extremely cold weather, the Fessenden Companies operated a skeleton crew one day. The Spaulding Fibre Company paid their employees bonuses. The Fire Department responded to four chimney fires one week and three the following week. Manchester, New Hampshire resident Nellie M. Hyman was fined \$20 in Ayer District Court on charges of driving to endanger.

1943
January - The Board of Selectmen, Rationing Board, Town Counsel Earle S. Bagley and oil dealer Willard A. Greer met and decided to send a tele-



Sticks and stones...Workers at Duncan Rusk's Granite Quarry, which operated in north Townsend from 1900-1936.

gram to the Supplies and Distribution Committee requesting information on the availability of fuel oil and kerosene. M. M. Beckes responded of the committee wrote, "So far as I know, no one is in a position to promise a definite amount of material because of the many factors affecting transportation." The selectmen, Evaluation Committee and School Committee made the commitment to take care of people forced out of their homes by the fuel oil shortage who could not find temporary shelter with friends or neighbors. To conserve fuel and electricity, the library was closed on Saturdays. Police Chief Arthur P. Bliss began checking up on pleasure drivers and submitted car registration numbers to the local rationing board. Violators of the pleasure driving regulations faced fines, jail sentences and the loss of their ration books. Fire Chief Harry C. Felch announced that his department responded to 70 calls during 1942, down from 82 in 1941. The number of Townsend men in the service was up to 165.

February - Norma Watkins was the first woman in Townsend to enlist in the WAVES. The

number of Townsend men in the service rose again to 171. War ration book registration began. A Fessenden Companies truck driven by Emerson Chace skidded on the icy road and crashed on Main Street. Fessenden Companies employees received raises ranging from five to ten percent. There were three vacancies and only one contest in the upcoming Annual Town Meeting, but for the first time in recollection, it was scheduled for the evening. The town held another successful blackout.

March - Ira D. Carleton and Richard A. Keefe retained their constable positions. Arthur P. Bliss and Henry Bailey were chosen as water commissioners. Relected to town officers were Moderator A. Dudley Bagley, Jr., Selectmen Hollis Hathaway, Louis S. Josselyn and Stephen W. Keefe, Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Treasurer William H. Millington, Tax Collector Clement J. Altmiller, Assessor Joseph Arlin, Lester Spofford and William Wing, Tree Warden William W. Copeland, Board of Health members Melora E. Proctor, Henry S. Bailey and Richard S. Ely, Board of Public Welfare members Francis N. Boutelle, Clare F. Creighton and Dorothy B. Keefe, School Committee members Ruth M. Marshall and Ellen W. Whitcomb, Trustee of the Public Library Evelyn L. Warren, Park Commissioner William H. Wing, Cemetery Commissioner Abbott Hodgman and Trustees of the James H. Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely, Eva M. Ely and Oscar B. Mudgett. The town appropriated \$107,970 for the year. Bertha Laakso was the first Townsend woman to become a member of the WAACS. Fat Salvage Committee Chairman Lilla Seaver reported that fat collection totaled 1,250 pounds. State employment tax went into effect

for employers of one or more people. In an effort to cut down on Saturday employee absenteeism, Fessenden Companies changed its pay day from Friday to Saturday. Conservation Officer Herbert C. Peaslee and Wilfred E. Hamel released 500 two year old brown trout in the Squannicook River. Ashby resident Harry L. Hill was fined \$35 in Ayer District Court for driving his car into the side of an Economy Stores truck on Main Street.

April - State Director of Selective Service Colonel Ralph M. Smith announced that the available supply of single men on all of Massachusetts' 173 local boards would be pooled to fill the May call for the armed forces. This was the first time that it was necessary to allocate the call without regard for individual local board quotas. The Draft Board No. 74 based in Groton reclassified married men. Chairman Frank A. Torrey said, "All married men without children, who are not key men in industry and are not otherwise subject to deferent, are being reclassified." The tax rate was set for \$29.40. George Henry Brown Turner, editor and publisher of *Turner's Public Spirit*, died. The Fire Department was called out for two grass fires and a fire in a blacksmith shop. There were two more grass fires later in the month.

May - The number of Townsend residents in the armed services rose to 210. District Rationing Attorney Raymond C. Baldes announced that driving to cemeteries by immediate relatives to decorate graves was not banned by non-essential driving regulations. The Board of Health closed Grange Hall because of unsanitary conditions. Spofford, New Hampshire resident George LaClair was fined \$10 in Ayer District Court

after being found guilty of driving in excess of 35 miles per hour. Police Chief P. Arthur Bliss said that he was driving 50 miles per hour through Townsend.

June - Residents experienced gas shortages of 50 percent and were threatened with filling station closings. Test air raid warnings were sounded daily for six successive days. A surprise alarm proved successful with all signals recognized. Spaulding Memorial School received the first award in the state for public service activities. Lightning struck the tower of the Methodist Church. Women working inside were not injured. The home of Walter Funaiole was also struck by lightning. The bolt caused a small fire.

July - State Director of Selective Service Colonel Ralph M. Smith announced that men who were acceptable for limited service, but were rejected, would again be forwarded for induction. Holders of the basic gas ration, limited to one and a half gallons a week, were ineligible for tires if their own tires were beyond the recapping stage. Vacationers, under certain conditions, could use their ration coupons to drive while on vacation. New ration coupons were issued for trucks and commercial vehicles. Some operators were cut up to 44 percent. A test blackout was not as successful as previous tests. The water commissioners curtailed the use of lawn sprinklers. The Spaulding Fibre Company plant superintendent resigned to accept a position at Barre Wool Combing Co., Ltd., in South Barre. He was succeeded by Ernest Hamel. 16 month old Walter Rossbach was on the danger list at the Children's Hospital in Boston as a result of inhaling kerosene.

August - Further rationing of cooking and heating equipment was announced by Field Liaison Officer of the State OPA Joseph M. McDonald. Willard Brook was the site of State Guard Maneuvers. Marjorie Baumis was elected unanimously by the School Committee and the selectmen to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Harry A. Morrison. Baumis-Warford Vice President Lockett G. Coleman was approved by selectmen for a position on the Rationing Board. The contents of the Winchendon Inn were auctioned. The best piece was a Penbrook rope-leg table that was sold to Miss Culley of Fitchburg for \$37. It was solid mahogany and was about 100 years old.

September - Full military honors were paid to Sgt. Franklin Terrill of West Townsend. He was the first Townsend resident to die in the service in World War II. A Special Town Meeting appropriated \$2,141.29. The Board of Selectmen received a report recommending the purchase of land for town recreation. A 14 year old minor received three years probation in Ayer District Court after he confessed larceny of money from two stores to the Townsend police. Two weeks later, the youth was committed to the Industrial School in Manchester, New Hampshire by New Hampshire authorities. The action was a result of a breaking into a filling station in Peterborough NH.

October - Airplane spotters

throughout the country were relieved of their duties. Ration registration was held. Open houses for servicemen began. Three trees fell during an electrical storm and knocked out power for an hour and a half. A thoroughbred pointer, "Pal," possibly saved the life of its master when fire broke out in the home of Eli Philip Gagnon.

November - The draft boards announced that between 20,000 and 40,000 Massachusetts fathers would be reclassified as 1-A, available for immediate service. John Lawson, 23, and Robert Brown, 14, both from South Lancaster, narrowly escaped death by drowning when their car plunged over the Fitchburg Road bridge into the Squannicook River. To conserve electrical power, the Fessenden Companies went on a new time schedule.

December - Six companies of the Massachusetts State Guard, Acton, Littleton, Lunenburg, Pepperell, Groton and Townsend engaged in maneuvers. Townsend blood donors exceeded the town's quota. Samuel A. Woods announced that he would closed his general store.

1944
January - Clark's lumber mill in West Townsend burned to the ground, causing losses estimated at \$10,000. For the eleventh consecutive year, Harry C. Felch was appointed Chief of the Fire Department. The Townsend Odd Fellows formed a committee to plan for a hall.

February - The war loan drive lagged behind expectations with only \$18,000 subscribed. The Townsend National Bank distributed ration tokens on February 27. Twenty-six new voters were registered. It was announced that German prisoners of war would be brought to the area, housed at Fort Devens and help pick the apple crop. A fire completely destroyed the home of Leander Fleck and two daughters, Lucille and Joanne, died as a result of burns suffered in the blaze. Contributions for the family were reported at \$1,780. A blaze destroyed the farm owned by Joseph A. Coffey. Seventeen head of cattle, 30 hens and 4 pigs perished and almost 30 tons of hay and a large quantity of farm machinery was destroyed. Damage was estimated at \$10,000. The E. A. Spaulding Rebekah lodge, No. 124 celebrated its 50th anniversary. Mary E. Worcester bequeathed \$5,000 to the Townsend Public Library.

March - Only 130 ballots were cast in the Annual Town Meeting. The low turnout was attributed to all but one uncontested office. Earle S. Bagley was named Moderator. Relected were Town Clerk Robert A. Copeland, Treasurer William H. Millington, Tax Collector Clement J. Altmiller, Selectmen Hollis Hathaway, Louis Josselyn and Stephen A. Keefe, Public Aid and Old Age Assistance members Clare F. Creighton, Francis N. Boutelle and Dorothy B. Keefe, Board of Health members Richard S. Ely, Melora E. Proctor and Harry S. Bailey, Constables Ira D. Carleton and Richard A. Keefe, School Committee members Roy E. Brown and Marjorie J. Baumis, Library Trustee Robert G. Fessenden, Park Commissioner William T. MacMaster, Water Commissioner Henry S. Bailey, Cemetery Commissioner Ralph T. Kilbourn, Trustees of the James N. Tucker Fund Richard S. Ely, Eva M. Ely and Oscar Mudgett, Tree Warden William W. Copeland and Assessor Walter Farrar. A statewide blackout and air raid test was held on March 26 and called a success. The Clarke Lumber Company resumed operation. The upper floors of Frank Hoxie's house burned. The loss was estimated at between \$1,000 and \$1,500. The wholesale florist factory of Daniel Doyle, Sr. in West Townsend was completely destroyed by fire. Damages were estimated at \$10,000. Carolyn Chace, 14, was struck by a car on Dudley Road. She suffered a compound fracture.

April - Only 47 votes were cast at the presidential primary election. The tax rate was set for \$27.40. Fire Chief Harry Curtis Felch died suddenly in his home. He joined the fire department on July 3, 1902 and was appointed chief in 1930. He served continuously with the exception of

Continued on page 21

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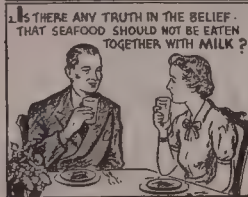
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What Do You Know About Health?

By FISHER BROWN and NAT FALK



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WHO IS
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HAMILTON?**

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Harbor home...This home on South Street, Townsend Harbor, was built around 1803.



Building of books...The Hart Memorial Free Library.

The war rages on

Continued from page 20

the years 1932-1933. Herbert A. Wilson was appointed to serve as acting fire chief. Francis N. Boutelle was reelected president of the Historical Society.

May - Under the direction of Lt. Barclay Smith, 150 British sailors arrived at the U.S. Naval rest camp in West Townsend. A diphtheria immunization clinic was held. A \$100 raise was granted to all Spaulding Memorial School teachers. At least a fire a day confronted new Fire Chief Walter Leonard during his first week in the position. Mrs. Forrest E. Richards was fined \$25 in Ayer District Court for having a slot machine in operation in her store. Townsend's oldest resident, Beniah Harvey Savage, died at age 97.

June - Publisher of the *Times Free Press* Elbridge G. Cann purchased the former Winchester Inn for the newspaper offices and plant. Hazel F. Tenney was appointed Acting Postmaster of the West Townsend Post Office. William H. Millington resigned as Treasurer. A Special Town Meeting was scheduled for July 18 to replace him. Stephen A. Keefe took over Whitcomb Insurance. Flood waters of the Nashua and Squannacook Rivers and tributaries damaged fields and roads.

July - May Parker was elected the new town treasurer in the Special Town Meeting. The U.S. Civil Service Commission an-

nounced the examination to fill the vacancy in the position of Postmaster in West Townsend. For the first time in 50 years, the Spaulding Fibre Company employed a woman. Rossiter A. Fisher and Toivo Wonkka, both of Fitchburg, purchased the Adams Mill property on Elm Street. They planned to operate a toy and furniture factory. A Navy pilot bailed out of a Grumman Hellcat when his plane crashed and burned in a deeply wooded section in the Cape Corner section. Marion Cutting, a high school junior, saved

O/S Peter Powell of the British Royal Navy from drowning in a swimming hole.

August - Massachusetts Director of Selective Service Ralph M. Smith announced that men between the ages of 26 and 38 would no longer be granted a blanket deferment from the draft. Gas supplies were very low and some stations had no gas. State highway crews resurfaced Route 119 from the Ashby-Townsend line into Groton. The *Times Free Press* moved to its new location at the former Winchester Inn. Fessenden

Companies employee Edgar Gilson was injured when he was thrown from a barrel truck and landed on some barrels. Charles Richards was given a three year contract for a school bus route. Four juveniles ransacked the home of Mervin W. Wares and stole several articles. An electrical storm damaged the wiring at Spaulding Memorial School.

September - Police and State Guardsmen were ordered to be on alert on September 14 for a threatening hurricane. The hurricane did very little damage, knocking out some electricity and causing some downed limbs. Three women took the Civil Service examination for the postmaster position in West Townsend. Fred J. Tenney sold his brick store at the Center to his nephew George Fred Tenney. Angela Perini, 7, was taken to Burbank Hospital in Fitchburg for diagnosis and observation for polio. Charles Eggleston fell asleep at the wheel of his car and skidded into a curb. Wilfred Valcourt was slightly injured when the gas tank in his truck exploded and set fire to the garage and woodshed. Valcourt's truck was destroyed and damages were estimated at \$500.

October - The tax rate was set for \$35.60. Ninety-six names were added to the registered voter list bringing the total to 1,213. A Special Town Meeting was scheduled for November 14 for

departments requiring additional appropriations. Doris Lagasse, 18, was sentenced to 30 days in the house of correction in Cambridge at Ayer District Court after refusing probation. Lagasse was arrested for being a stubborn child. Townsend and Pepperell fire fighters as well as a State Forest fire crew kept a brush fire contained to six acres. Resident Joseph B. Funaiole hit a deer with his car in West Groton.

November - In the state primary election, Townsend voted for Dewey over Roosevelt and approved, by 72 votes, a package liquor store in town. The liquor license fee was set at \$300 and the town received 13 requests for applications. Townsend Public

Library Librarian Evelyn L. Warren was honored at a reception in recognition of 50 years service to the library. Wallace received an honorary degree of Librarian Emeritus. Margaret Cook suffered abrasions when the car she was riding in collided with a bakery truck on the Townsend-Lunenburg line. A fire destroyed the home of 84 year old Leonard Searle.

December - The Board of Selectmen considered four applications for a liquor license. The license was granted to Herbert Hotaling. Dorothy W. Goulding was sworn in as acting Postmistress of the West Townsend Post Office after Hazel F. Tenney tendered her resignation.

Continued on page 26

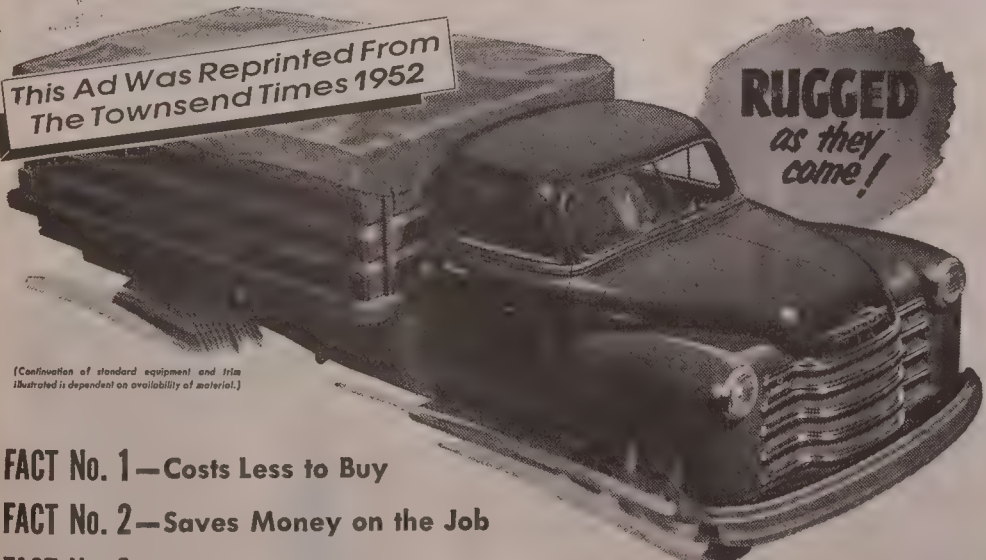


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The Townsend Military Band: A summer tradition

by Janet A. Hoffman

TOWNSEND - Summer arrives every year as it has for over 150 years - with the Townsend Military Band concerts on the common.

The tradition of a town band grew out of the military bands that furnished music for parades, musters and inspections between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. The Townsend Light Infantry, chartered by Captain Isaac Turner in 1817, commissioned musicians to accompany it. The band was formally organized as the Townsend Military Band in 1838. Now, the Townsend Military Band holds the distinction of being the third oldest U.S. military band in continuous operation.

The early band was modeled

after its military brass counterpart. Instruments now include coronets and trumpets, trombones, baritones, French horns, tubas, piccolos, clarinets and percussion. A special feature of the band can still be seen and heard during performances on sunny days. It is a Civil War vintage Gilmore drum, complete with skin heads and a wood framework adorned with rope.

According to Band Manager Betty Mae Tenney, the band competed in a military band contest at Walden Pond on July 4, 1879 and took first place. The prize was a four foot ebony baton. It is still in the band's possession.

In 1895, the town replaced the existing bandstand at a cost of \$400. Francis L. Spring designed it and Captain A. D. Fessenden

donated the lumber and materials to build it. Fessenden also advanced the money to pay for construction and labor. The dedication ceremony on the common was held on August 22, 1895. The bandstand was moved to its present location in 1941 to make room for the Civil War monument.

Townsend celebrated the band's centennial with a weekend festival on July 22 and 23, 1938. Planning began in January of 1938. The celebration included a parade, two baseball games, tug-of-war contests, volleyball and ping pong exhibitions and two concerts that attracted a crowd estimated at 6,000 from near and far.

Players make a long commitment to the band. Asa Tyler was an active member for 66 years, from 1861 to 1927, and George S. Talcott served as conductor for 34 years, from 1956 to 1990.

Romeo Couture directed the band during the 1991 season and is expected to continue with the 1992 season.

Some of the older programs reveal that the band's repertoire has not changed very much through its history. Old fashioned band music, including Sousa marches, Civil War themes and Broadway musical medleys continue to be the mainstay of the Townsend Military Band's performances.

The band owns almost 1400 pieces of music which were painstakingly cataloged in 1937. The music fills 11 steel letter files and is cross-referenced by numerical and a theme-definition systems.

The Townsend Military Band traditionally performs 10 concerts a year. Due to current fiscal constraints, only three dates for the summer of 1992 have been confirmed. Tenney is awaiting results from the Annual Town Meeting to determine the extent of future fund-raising activities to continue this well-loved and well-attended Townsend summer tradition.



Music men (and women)...Townsend Military Band concerts continue to delight audiences.



Praising the Lord...The Baptist Church on Main Street, dedicated in 1835.

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Vanity Fair and Gordon Nylon Hose, 8 1/2 to 11,

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Cotton and Wool Socks by Kayser and Gordon, 9 to 11, 39c to 75c

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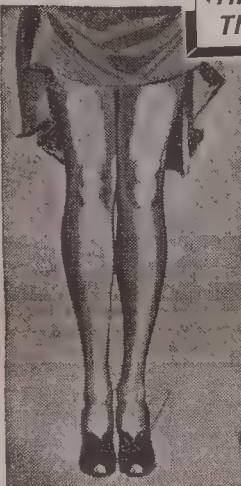
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We Are Still Giving a Good Reduction on Housecoats and Robes.

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- Credits for annual premium payment
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- Children's insurance rider
- Reduced rates on spouse's coverage
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- Accidental death and waiver of premium benefits
- Discounted rates for amounts over \$100,000

Townsend Historical Society: Established November 13, 1896

by Kate Walsh

TOWNSEND - For 95 years, the Townsend Historical Society has worked to preserve and protect that which gives Townsend its own unique character — its history. Though society membership has changed through the ensuing decades, the dedication to this town's heritage has remained.

In his *History of Townsend*, Ithamar B. Sawtelle often referred to the relevance of history. He quoted Thomas Fuller, D.D., "a man of excellent learning and great benevolence," with making the following statement, made in the mid 1600's:

"History is a velvet study, and recreation work. What a pity it is to see a proper gentleman to have such a crick in his neck that he cannot look backward! Yet no better is he who cannot see behind him the actions which long since were performed. History maketh a young man to be old; privileging him with the experience of age, without either the infirmities or inconveniences thereof. Yea, it not only maketh things past, present; but enableth one to make a rational conjecture of things to come."

In March of 1878 Sawtelle wrote, "The history of Townsend should have been written long ago, before the third generation from the fathers passed away. Many things, of great interest, can never be known which might have been learned if a timely effort had been made. Even tradition seems to have died out. The farms, on our hill-sides, once occupied by large families, the sons and daughters of which filled the school houses, and wended their way to one common place of worship, on the sabbath, are now in the hands of strangers. The history of the earliest settlers of this town can never be written satisfactorily. It is impossible to point out the exact location where many of them 'broke the wilderness' and built their cabins."

It was largely to identify and mark earliest settlement sites that prompted residents of nineteenth century Townsend to meet on March 26, 1896 to discuss preservation of the Town's founding and history. On November 13, 1896, with charter and bylaws complete, the Townsend Historical Society was established. Anson D. Fessenden was elected President.

A history of the Townsend Historical Society was written based on the writings of Eli C. Tuttle, society secretary and historian during the early years of the organization, and information provided by current and long time Townsend resident Elsie Lowe. In this history, the work of the society was termed "varied," since in some years only officers were elected, while in others, the society was active in identifying and marking historic sites, collecting historic relics and further educating themselves through

featured speakers and the reading of historical documents and letters.

During the early years of the society, the number of relics donated for preservation began to increase. These items were either kept in members' homes or stored in a room in Memorial Hall. With the building of the Hart Free Library in 1929, relics could then be kept in the library's historical room.

Starting around the time of Townsend's 225th Anniversary in 1952, the society began issuing booklets which included "The History of Townsend Harbor" by Harry Knight, "The History of the Churches of Townsend" by Ruth Marshall, Doris Davis, Gladys L. Merrill and Charles E. Monahan and "The Adams' of Townsend" and "Divinity and Dust" by Richard N. Smith.

In 1957, the society published a 225th Anniversary Edition booklet of Townsend containing photographs depicting historic scenes as well as photos of life in the 1950's.

The Town's 250th Anniversary was marked with the issuance of another booklet in 1982, designed, laid out and illustrated by then president Guenther K. Wehrhan. This edition, considered to be more complete, included maps showing the town as it had been to allow the reader to visualize the locations of buildings long gone, of which only photographs remained.

By 1971, the Townsend Historical Society was incorporated as a private, non-profit organization with the State and Federal Governments. "...there was increasing activity. The members started urging the board to find their own home for meetings and storage. By now, a considerable amount of artifacts had been gathered."

In 1972, the society acquired the historic Reed House, due, in part, to the intervention of Al Anderson, owner and president of New England Business Services. The acquisition was deemed highly important due to the historic value of the home.

"The Reed House (built in 1790) is the Crown Jewel in the Historic Society's possessions as

old maps show it was the home of entrepreneurs who established fulling mills, cooperages, blacksmith shops, and grist mills in the area."

Three Townsend Harbor historic properties were acquired by the society during the 1980's — the Harbor Church, Cooperage and Grist Mill. With the help of Historical Society members Ed and Mary West, the society acquired the Cooper Shop on Townsend Hill. It is hoped that this building will someday be moved to join the Townsend Harbor historic complex.

"The goal of the Historic Society is to have a genuine Historic and Educational Exhibit here, with most of the residential and business areas on their original sites. The exhibit, in the future, should be able to show where and how these industrial pioneers lived and worked."

Many people are credited with helping to further the work of the society both in terms of acquiring properties and raising the necessary funds to stabilize and restore them. Individuals such as Bob and Beverly Zollinhofer, Guenther K. Wehrhan, Al Anderson, Hildreth Proctor and William and Catherine Frey; businesses including Harbor Realty and the T.J. Anderson and Son Funeral Home; and organizations such as The Townsend Couples Club, T.E.A.M., the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, the NEBS Foundation, the Bruce Anderson Foundation, local and state historic commissions and many more.

The Townsend Historical Society exists to cultivate and encourage interest in the history of Townsend, to collect and preserve all manner of historical items to promote research into Townsend history and to prepare and present papers on these subjects. The Society works to properly mark the sites of historic events and to acquire property of historic value, maintain it and arrange for its restoration. The Society's aim is to make these properties accessible to public viewing and to establish and maintain endowment funds for the future welfare of properties that come into their care.



Reminiscing...Sharing memories of an earlier time in Townsend were Elizabeth Cooke, her daughter Norma Cote, Lucy Stevens, Beulah Greenough and Catherine Wilson. (Walsh photo)

"I remember when..." Memories of long ago in Townsend

by Kate Walsh

I recently spent a pleasant afternoon at Atwood Acres on Dudley Road. Gathered about me were ladies of admirable years who remembered a Townsend of long ago, when things were quite different from the way they are now.

Present were Catherine Wilson, a noted Townsend historian, Beulah Greenough, Lucy Stevens, Norma Cote, Elizabeth Cooke, Aili Lemay and Nellie Myllykangas. These current Townsend residents spent their youths in this town and were gracious enough to share some of their memories.

SCHOOL

"I snowshoed and skied to school along this road," remembered Elizabeth Cooke, as she recalled her school days during the early 1920's. "I lived at the Dudley Farm and there was only one other house along this road. There was a wagon pulled by two old horses to take the children to school, but I could walk faster than those

horses...the school was called the Townsend School at that time, there was no name to it. It was in what is called the Evans building now."

Lucy Stevens, too, recalled school at the Townsend School. "There were three rooms on the first floor and one big room upstairs that was the study hall. The upstairs was the high school and there were two rooms beside that. I went to school in 1905. I was born in 1900 and my mother sent me to school when I was five years old."

"I remember school as though it were yesterday," said Lucy. "There were two classes in every room and one teacher. In high school, I always remember this, there were two entrances to that building and the girls used one entrance and the boys used the other."

"It was still that way when I went there," recalled Catherine.

"By the time I went to school, we had a barge, they still call them a barge in Vermont," noted Catherine. "It was an old truck fitted over with a couple of side

benches and side curtains and in the summer we rolled them all up."

Some present had spent all their school years at Spaulding. "Spaulding was considered to be the finest consolidated school in New England when it was built," said Catherine. "The Town couldn't afford a home ec room. We didn't have any home ec teacher and the state found out about it and they subsidized a home ec teacher. To my astonishment, I found that all the time they ran Spaulding, she had to report to the state because they were paying her salary."

Catherine continued, "Everyone who lived in the Center went to school in what is now the Evans building.... When my mother went to high school in the late 1800's, she had to move downtown and board down there," she said. "There were two other girls from the hill, Townsend Hill, and they moved down to what was later called the Beehive. Ralph [Catherine's husband] always called it the Donovan block. There were three

Continued on page 24

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"Remember when..."

Continued from page 23

or four apartments in there and the fathers had hired the apartments. The girls took their food, canned goods and potatoes and lived there together and walked down to school in the Center."

"At that time, many people didn't go to school at all, it was a matter of choice almost," said Lucy. "You only went to school when your parents wanted to send you, in the late 1800's. If you left school at 12 years old to help your folks, that was alright."

Progress in school went by the Reader, explained Catherine. "If you were in the first Reader and you did good, you went on to the second Reader..."

"This was when we had one room schoolhouses and the teacher taught 12 grades," said Lucy. "If you didn't go to school it was because your parents needed you."

"Or because you didn't have shoes," offered Catherine.

"Well, my mother was one of nine children," said Lucy, "and during one winter she would go to school one day and wear the shoes and the next day her sister would go and wear the shoes. They only had one pair of shoes between them. My mother was born in 1884 and she lived to be 105."

FIREWORKS AND THE FOURTH

"The Homers gave every child in West Townsend 50 cents worth of fireworks for the Fourth of July," remembered Catherine. The fireworks were given out from a stand set up near Tenney's store.

Catherine explained that Charles Homer lived in a brick colonial on Main Street in West Townsend, more recently occupied as a shop by Elsa Williams. The Homers had made their fortune with the development of a product called "Valspar," which was considered to be an improvement over varnish.

"My father used to sell Mrs. Homer her cow — she always wanted their own milk," said Lucy, who lived in the Depot Street area at the time. "I remember twice he sold her a cow.... I can remember riding up there in the horse and buggy and my father leading the cow behind. Mrs. Homer would always have us come in the side door, into the kitchen. She was a bustling little thing and she'd make a cup of tea and have some goodies of some kind."

"The night before the Fourth, there was a parade going through town. The men used to go down to the old mill and get the band saws and pound on them," recalled Lucy. "It was the awfulest racket all through the town. My brothers used to go out but I wasn't allowed out — being a girl. The men and boys would parade up and down Main Street and they had these old saws they pounded on — anything to make noise. It was such a clatter all night long."

"Then they'd have bonfires," said Lucy, "they kept them beside the road or anyplace. Of course, we didn't have paved roads in those days, but we had bonfires all over the place on the Fourth and the night before. There were all kinds of firecrackers and fireworks — you fired them in your own yard — anywhere — it didn't matter where you fired them, of course there were accidents. I didn't like it all because

my brothers were always throwing firecrackers in my room."

"I remember them telling about somebody putting one of Fessenden's wagons up on top of Osgood's store," said Catherine. "The next day, they'd go and get it down."

"My father was driving one of those wagons at the time," said Lucy. "Their barn was where Bruce's garage is, that used to be a big barn to keep the wagons and horses in. The boys would run the wagons into the river and my father's wagon was in that barn, but he was smart. He stayed up at night because he knew there was a lot going on. He saw the kids that ran the big wagon, for the logs, down into the river. The next day my father went rapping on doors saying, 'would you please help me get the wagon out of the river?' They didn't have the nerve to say anything, they knew they were guilty. Everybody was doing something."

"And they all went along with it," remarked Catherine. "There used to be a pile of cannon ball in the front yard of Memorial Hall and it was the biggest stunt when a boy got big enough to push one of those cannon ball off somewhere and eventually, I think they would up in the river. Even the Chief of Police admits he finally pushed some of them down there and as far as he knows they're still in the river."

STREET LIGHTS

"When I was a kid, there were no street lights," said Lucy. "There were little lamp posts that weren't too high. Inside was a little lamp filled with about a cup of oil. When we were living down there on Elm Street, my brother and I could just see over the window sill but we had one of those lamps outside the house. This man would come along with a little ladder — it had three rungs on it — and he'd put it against the post and take the kerosene out, open the door of the little lamp, and put about a cup of kerosene in there. My mother said that would last 'til about morning."

"When we had Band Concerts, they had some of these lamps around but it was really dark during the Band Concert. Out near Tenney's store, there was this old couple, Mr. and Mrs. Dix, who sold ice cream. They made two freezers — one chocolate and one vanilla. You had a dish full of ice cream for a nickel."

"It was 1920 when they ran electric lights through the Harbor," said Catherine.

"They had them in the Center before that," noted Lucy.

"Ralph told about them having a ladder built on a wagon and when they wanted to know if the light bulbs had gone out, they'd turned on all the lights and the man with the wagon went around and climbed on his ladder and replaced the light bulbs," said Catherine. The year was around 1910.

FIRE

"I remember when there was a fire across from our house, when the barn burned," recalled Lucy. "I was in the third grade then and I was seven years old. I was so frightened but my mother said the best place for me was in school. I went but my mother came up later and got me because all I did was cry."

"We lived right across from there [current site of Webber Lumber]. It was Union Adams' horse barn for the mill, that burned. We were eating dinner and my father was home. He worked for Union Adams and it was noon. His horses were over there and someone hollered, 'Fire! Fire!' They had a lot of hay in the barn and it caught on fire. We thought sure the house would go.... I thought my mother, father, everybody would be burned up."

"The fire station was where it is now," noted Lucy. "Someone in town would take their horses up and bring the fire apparatus down and they always had a big thing full of water. The first two to get there with their horses would receive a dollar. Any men near the fire would go to fight it."

"In the twenties, there was a certain group that would go to the fires," explained Catherine. "It wasn't everybody. They already had Fessenden's Co. by then and later on the fellas down at Fessenden's were privileged to leave work. They would take Fessenden's horses and go to the Fire Department. Fessenden was the only employer in town then and they did a lot to help. Of course they owned most of the forest in town so they wanted a fire department in case the woods caught on fire."

TOWN MEETING DAY

"We always closed the school and Fessenden closed the company on Town Meeting day," said Catherine. "The teachers from the

school were expected to go and the men from the mill were supposed to go."

"One of the men in Fessenden's office was Timothy Flaherty and he was our Moderator for 44 years. He played in the Band and was director for a long time. The center of town circulated around Tim in many ways — he was Moderator, head of the band and very influential in the Grange. He got to be State Treasurer."

"Town Meeting was a big thing," said Catherine. "The women made dinner ('They couldn't vote until 1921,' Lucy reminded.) downstairs in Memorial Hall. The meeting started in the morning and recessed for dinner which the women had prepared. They paid them. They made money for the church, usually. Memorial Hall was built in 1894, so we're talking about the period from then until 1932 when the schoolhouse was built."

THE WHISTLES

"You know, one of the things I miss is the whistles," recalled Catherine. "Fessenden's, and then there was a mill in the Harbor...they blew the whistles at six o'clock in the morning, at quarter of seven, seven o'clock, at noon, everybody dropped everything and went to lunch, quarter of one, you started back, one o'clock, and five o'clock, until they put it back to four o'clock when they stopped working nine hour days."

"They worked til six o'clock at one time, too," offered Lucy.



Crown Jewel...The Reed Homestead, acquired by the Townsend Historical Society in 1972.

The Reed Homestead: Historical "Crown Jewel"

by Kate Walsh

The Reed Homestead is a Federal period home, built in 1790 by John Jewett. It was acquired by the Townsend Historical Society in 1972, and is considered to be the "Crown Jewel" among the society's possessions.

According to Historical Society records, Captain Timothy Fessenden came to Townsend and ran a tanning business in 1789 on the present site of the Reed House. The property was then purchased by John Jewett, with the house being built around 1790.

In 1808 or 9, the home was sold to Oliver Reed who brought his bride, Lettie Wilson, to the home in 1809. Reed carried on the work of the tanning trade until approximately 1827. Oliver and Lettie had five children, but it was the last child, Harriet, who never married and inherited the house.

Upon Harriet's death, her namesake niece, Harriet Reed Strout, bought the home at auction as well as many of its contents. She returned the furnishings to the home and took up residence in 1910, added electricity in 1920 and laid out the gardens in the early 1930's.

In 1942, Harriet's daughter, Letty Strout Proctor, inherited the house, which was used as a summer home for many years. Mrs. Proctor gave the house to her sons, Hildreth and Robert Proctor, who sold the property to the Historical Society.

Architecturally, the Historical Society considers the house to be "one of the best that any small town could boast with its interior remarkably unaltered." Early hardware, hinges and latches are found throughout the house, representing several periods. All the floors have wide boards and all the fireplaces are present with the addition to some of Franklin Frames and cast iron stoves. The kitchen contains a hand pump and black iron sink which pumps water from the original well.

Perhaps the most stunning portion of the Reed House is the mural painted on the walls of one upstairs bedroom. This mural dates back to between 1830 and 1840 and was painted by 19th century folk artist Rufus Porter, founder of The Scientific American. This mural is considered to be perhaps the most perfect example of Porter's work in existence.

Rufus Porter was born in Massachusetts in 1772. He acquired a considerable reputation as a traveling artist throughout New England from 1815 to 1840. He is best known today for the murals and stencils he painted on the walls of homes and taverns as a substitute for the expensive imported wallpapers of the day.

The Townsend Historical Society considers the immense importance of the Reed Homestead murals to lie in the fact that they are so beautifully preserved. "The vividness of the yellows and greens is such as to astonish the viewer who walks into the room and sees them for the first time. The scenes depicted are considered typically Portersque — water views and houses in the middle distance, with other houses, trees, and mountains in the background. In the foreground are large, graceful elm trees and smaller shrubbery. The clarity of the work makes it difficult to believe that it was executed approximately 150 years ago."

The Reed house is in the National Register of Historical homes. With so few alterations made to the original structure of the house, the architectural integrity of the building has been maintained, lending further value to its acquisition by the society. When restored, the Reed Homestead will become part of a unique mini-museum in Townsend Harbor, featuring the Reed Homestead, Conant Tavern, Cooperage and Grist Mill. It is hoped by the society that the Cooper Shop from the Copeland place on Townsend Hill will someday be moved to join this historic area.



The Grist Mill at Townsend Harbor...The Grist Mill, built circa 1820 by E.S. Spaulding, is located next to the Squannicook River on South Street. Area farmers brought their corn, shorts, middlings, rye and oats to the mill to be ground. Several other buildings were added to the mill, including an office known as Jonas Spaulding's "Counting House." After the war, it was used as a drying house and mill lot. The grain business remained until 1925. The portion of the building that remains today was acquired by the Townsend Historical Society in 1981. At the time, it was one of the historic Townsend Harbor buildings in the possession of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities.

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"Old Mansion" is example of Early American architecture

by Elsie L. Lowe

Editor's note from 1992: The following article was written by Times correspondent Elsie L. Lowe during her first few months as a reporter. It was first printed on July 22, 1954, on the front page of the Times. Up until just a few years ago, she was a regular contributor of features and her popular "Along Main Street" column. Elsie still resides in her unique home along Main Street.

Before there was even a town here called Townsend, John Conant came up from Concord and built a mansion beside the Squannacook River.

Why he came, and exactly when, we'll never know, nor where he found the workmen to erect the massive chimney or the huge pegged timbers and corner posts. But he was a man of means, for this was no rude cabin but a carefully planned and beautifully proportioned mansion so well put together that its 235 years or more of busy life have only mellowed its original charm.

It was at least as far back as 1720, and perhaps some years before that date, when John Conant came. This was all wilderness then with nothing west of the Groton line but woods and streams, with only the occasional footfall of a passing Indian to break the stillness.

Harbor Pond was not yet formed, for the dam would not be built until 1734, but along the bank of the river, on what we call South Road, John Conant chose his site.

The four big original rooms, two down and two up, which Conant built are today very nearly as he made them. Just inside the big front door, which is probably not the original door, is the small winding staircase, and to the right, the big 14 by 17 foot "keeping room" with fireplace eight feet long, big enough for a man to stand upright inside, and with two arched warming ovens, one on each side. The little niche in the brickwork of the chimney behind the cellar door shows where the flint for lighting fires was always kept. The walls here, as in all the original rooms, are sheathed in very wide horizontal featheredged boards, extremely decorative in themselves.

To the south of the front door was the kitchen, sheathed the same, and with another huge fireplace, this one having the bake oven beside it in which a fire was built, the oven thoroughly heated, the coals then removed with a long-handled iron "peeler," and the bread put in to bake.

Upstairs are two rooms equally large although with fireplaces somewhat smaller. The north bedroom fireplace has freehand colored designs on the wooden facing, which may or many not have been done when the house was first built. All ceilings were beamed, showing the tremendously large timbers. Hinges are butterfly, L and H, and butterfly strap and the windows the beautifully proportioned nine over 12.

At the rear of the rooms downstairs was the unheated transverse hall and up over it what may have been two small rooms or may only have been storage space. The angled staircase between the two floors at the rear is most unusual in that no two risers and treads are the same height or depth.

But the most unique feature of the house and one of the loveliest is the staircase from the second floor to the attic — a branching butterfly staircase with treads so tiny that one must needs step up it sideways. The whole arrangement

required but a small space but was planned and built so expertly that even today, though worn smooth and shiny with the tread of many generations, it is still as firm and solid as when first built.

The cellar, although under the whole house, is pretty much filled with the solid base of the chimney which measured 17 by 24 feet. Leading down to it are two staircases with steps of solid halved blocks of wood.

This, then, was the original mansion, built as a private home, but the years which saw the birth and growth of Townsend also saw additions to the old mansion.

It cannot have been too long after the governor granted a charter and named this place Townshend (spelled with an h) in 1732 that the mansion became a tavern and remained one at least until into the 19th century. The bar, we know, was at the northeast corner of the "keeping room" for there is still evidence on both walls and the floor to show where it stood.

About 1750 the upstairs south bedroom was enhanced with some beautiful paneling all along the fireplace wall, and it may have been about this time too, that the walls were plastered over the sheathing.

By the year 1775, Townsend had over 800 inhabitants and apparently they found the hospitality of the Conant Tavern to their taste. Then, too, more travelers were on the road who required a night's lodging, so about this time four rooms were added to the rear of the original house, and perhaps it was also at this time that the small ell, which is now the kitchen, was put on the south end. Also, the old transverse hall became a "middle" room with a large fireplace and baking oven added. The area over this on the second floor became two small rooms, thus making a total of 12 rooms in the mansion.

The two new rooms upstairs are bedrooms with corner fireplaces and with a charming view out over the harbor pond.

All windows in this new part are of the lovely 12 over 12 proportion.

Downstairs the two new rooms are beautifully finished with paneling and corner fireplaces and were called ladies parlors. One of the most attractive features of the whole house is the wall between these parlors, which is made to hang from hinges and can be raised and hooked to the ceiling so that the two parlors become one.

It isn't quite clear who of the Conant family was running the tavern at this time. Mrs. Sarah Conant, who may have been John's widow, was listed as innholder in 1776, but in 1780 it



The Old Mansion...The old Conant Tavern on South Street, Townsend Harbor. (Felix photo)

seems to have been a Nathan Conant who ran the Inn. There was at this time another young John Conant, too, for town records show that in 1771 he married Sarah Farrar of Townsend and by 1800, this second Sarah Conant, then a widow, owned the tavern.

It was probably during the time of this Sarah's regime that the stenciling was added to the dado in the big south bedroom. It is still in remarkably good condition and is of an unusual pattern. Connoisseurs of early New England stencil designs say they have never seen this pattern before.

One of the small middle rooms upstairs was at some time partly papered with issues of the old Massachusetts Weekly Journal of the year 1828. A perusal of this old yellowed paper gives a revealing picture of what life in and around Boston at that time was like. The advertisements offer bargains in horses, chaises, opium and rum, among other interesting items.

Sailings and arrivals of ships are listed, too, and accounts of weddings. Among the latter is one under the heading of Singular Marriages and concludes its account in this fashion: "The

bridegroom, who was one of the crew of the Rinaldo packet, unfortunately had both his arms shot off above the elbows, at Halifax, last July, on the anniversary of the King's coronation. He was indebted to the help of the carpenter for a pair of wooden hands, encased in a pair of gloves, having a spring at the fore finger, which enabled him to put on the ring."

Legend has it that the old Conant Tavern, in pre-civil war days, was one of the many stations in the underground railway system, smuggling slaves up to New Hampshire and into Canada. Whether true or not, it makes for interesting speculation. It is true, certainly, that the old cellar has at least one piece of granite in the wall nearest the river which looks as if it just might have covered an opening of the proper size to enable a fleeing slave to crawl through. Perhaps sometime there will be revealed a paved tunnel leading down to the river.

The history of the mansion following the Civil War is hazy, but at some time it ceased to be an inn and went through several ownerships. At one time it was owned jointly by two families who lived there separately. And

then for some time the house remained empty and no repairs were made on it.

It was in 1919 that the owners, wanting to get rid of the place, put an ad in the old Boston Transcript. And there, fortunately for the house, Mrs. Leslie Stow of Boston read it. She came to the Harbor, looked the mansion over and fell in love with it in spite of the messy condition it was in. The beautiful featheredged sheathing was covered with streaked wall paper, fireplaces were either boarded up or had newer, smaller ones built inside them, and the roof badly needed repairs. All in all, it was a discouraging sight and it was only a woman with an artist's creative zeal who could see that this "mess" was, underneath the clutter, a really handsome example of Early American architecture which could, with a great deal of hard work, be restored to its former beauty.

Mrs. Stow put in countless hours of hard labor on weekends and during the summers peeling off wallpaper, scraping walls and brushing them with stiff brushes and soft brushes, restoring floors, repairing ceilings and reopening its fireplaces.

Mrs. Stow has owned and loved the house for 34 years, but last year, feeling that she could no longer manage such a large place, she turned it over to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. The society has spent several thousands of dollars rebuilding the gigantic base of the central chimney, rewiring the house, putting in ra-

diant baseboard heating, reshingling the roof and modernizing the plumbing.

All the later brick work has been removed from the big fireplace in the "keeping room" so that it is now back to its original size. The only restoring in the mansion which the society has not yet done, but hopes sometime in the future to do, is the removing of the later brick work from the fireplace in what was originally the kitchen. They feel certain this fireplace is just as large as the one in the "keeping room," but since the present brickwork is in excellent condition and removing it would be a great expense, they are leaving it as it is for the present.

The society was assisted in its work by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Albro of West Townsend who, with their two children, are installed in the house as resident custodians. Both of them are experienced in restoring old houses and are delighted to have as their home the loveliest old mansion in this area. Mrs. Albro's collection of Early American Sandwich glass in the daisy and button pattern adds much to the interior beauty of the mansion.

Of the furnishings, some are antique and some modern, but the whole effect is one of wonderful charm and livableness.

As one passes the old mansion in the dusk of evening and one sees the ancient small paned windows lighted softly from within, then one feels the old house has once more come glowingly alive again.



The Copeland Cooper Shop...The Copeland Cooper Shop is one of the few remaining individual cooper shops in Townsend. In 1856, there were over 70 such shops scattered throughout the town that supplied hand-made hoops to Fessenden Co. and Adams' mill. The shop is located on the site of the Copeland place on Townsend Hill Road. The Cooper Shop was acquired by the Townsend Historical Society in 1971 through the generous donation of former society President Ed West and his wife, Mary.



Grand hotel...Hotel at Townsend Harbor, c. 1888.

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CREDIT CARD ORDERS ACCEPTED BY PHONE

Johnny comes marching home as WWII ends

Continued from page 21

1945
January - A copy of the *Townsend Times* cost 5 cents. Robert Farrar, a sophomore at Townsend High School, was elected president of the new Youth Center, called Teen Town. Dues would be 50 cents per year, and socials would be held every Saturday night. Seaman Theodore Dumas, husband of Alice Arlin Dumas of Townsend, was killed at sea. Suzanne Whitney and Leon Shattuck were married on New Year's afternoon. An article in the *Times* explained tighter wartime food rationing. Readers could enjoy Ernie Pyle's column about the war. Other columns included Hedda Hopper's Hollywood gossip, and Drew Pearson's Washington Go Round. One ad read "You can avenge Pearl Harbor 2 ways: Buy more War Bonds, Take a War Job with Bemis Bro. Bag Co... This is a war job with a post war future." Letters were printed from soldiers serving overseas. A party was held for Warren Ham, who was soon to enter the armed forces. Corporal Herbert Wheeler of the U.S. Marine Corps returned for a 30 day furlough after having been away from town for three years. Cpl. Blair Arseneault, Jr. recently completed an orientation course in England, and from there was to participate in the planned advance into Germany. The Townsend Grange put on a fashion show, with the men dressing as women. John Cotter Jr., USA paratroops, was injured in action in Belgium. Sgt. John Klais, member of the army training company at the West Townsend camp, suffered a severely sprained ankle in a jeep accident. The *Times* office became a Western Union agency. Messages could be sent from the Elm Street office and wires were delivered to Townsend residents who did not have a telephone. Robert Tumber, USN, came home on a 7 day leave after completing boot camp.

February - Former Townsend Selectmen J. Early Hughes died in Vermont. Edward Roland Elliott, Jr. completed Aviation Cadet training. Mabel Hamel was installed as president of the D. of UV of CW. Nearly 100 people at-

tended the memorial service for Pvt. George O. Maxwell in the Townsend Congregational Church. Frank E. Leahy of Townsend Harbor was fined \$50 for DUI and \$5 for drunkenness. Walter F. Leonard was reelected fire chief. Townsend Grange Hall was sold to Banner Press for \$2,500. Cpl. Parke H. Struthers, Jr. was sent to Pearl Harbor to rest after the fighting in the Marshalls and on Saipan. The Woman's Club observed "War Relief" Day.

March - Inducted into the army were Townsend residents Aubrey K. Wornham, Viljo O. Aho, and Louis E. Parker. The Townsend Red Cross participated in the March War Fund Campaign, with a quota of \$2100. The town warrant called for changing selectmen's terms from one to three years. The Townsend Package Store moved to the former Gem Lunch location. Dog Officer Arthur Boumman rescued Walter Farrar's dog from a dry well at the Fred Tenney house. T/S John J. Ojala returned home for a visit after a three year duty in Hawaii. Troop 10 presented a radio skit over WEEM. Mrs. Louis Josselyn was named head of the surgical dressings group. Pfc. Dexter P. Appleford, an employee of the *Times*, was serving in France and wrote of meeting a relative in Belgium. Jane Gobie's engagement of Dr. Lawrence A. Churchill was announced. Ethel Amiro, town and school nurse, announced annual diphtheria immunizations.

April - A brooder house fire killed 550 chickens at the John Pope farm. Donald Dik, star athlete at Townsend High School, received a Tufts Scholarship. Clothing was collected for war refugees. Pvt. Bert Tessier, who had been overseas for 33 months, wrote home that "the boys were making it plenty hot for the Nazis and that his next letter would be written from Berlin." The headline in the April 12 edition read "President Roosevelt Dies Suddenly." The Townsend Woman's Club presented "The Patsy," starring Mrs. Paul Prevost. Pfc. Charles Fagan died of wounds in Germany. Adelbert



Don't fence me in... Home on South Row Road.

L. Leeman, 71, former publisher and editor of the *Townsend Times*, died. Rev. Sherman Goodwin, pastor of the Congregational church for nearly 21 years, resigned. Everett W. Mason, seaman first class, was reported as having died.

May - Cpl. John C. Leahy was reported killed in action in Germany. Harold Reeves purchased the Main Street grocery business of Leon Ballou. The High School Girls Glee Club presented "My Tomboy Girl." The Townsend Air Scouts visited Britt's Airport in Groton, and were taken for seven minute plane rides. Doria Boucher, Jr. was injured in an auto crash in West Townsend. He had been home less than 24 hours on leave. 20 passengers narrowly escaped injury in a bus accident on Fitchburg Road. The Girl Scouts were selling war bonds. The Townsend Grange bought war bonds and discussed Victory Gardens. Walter Kumpu and James Newcombe were inducted into the army. Nancy Farrar was chosen queen of the Junior Prom.

June - 19 seniors graduated from Townsend High School in 1945. Cpl. Edward Reeves received leg wounds during a bombing, it was reported. A 600 pound wild Western steer disappeared from the Leo Makela farm on Bayberry Hill. The hunt continued. Frank Farnsworth, 91 and a Townsend resident for over 50 years, died. Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Wilson of Townsend Harbor became the parents of twin daughters, in addition to their other five children. The town's population was listed as 2323. Pvt. Melvin Pineo, age 19, was killed in action at Okinawa. He was the ninth Townsend boy to lose his life in World War II. Richard C. Spofford, a graduate with the Class of 1945 and class president, reported for boot camp.

July - The July 4 observance was the quietest in years, according to Police Chief Arthur Bliss. The Townsend Grange held a picnic. Al Eaton, star pitcher from Townsend, attended the Boston Red Sox baseball school. Charles Boutwell was honorably discharged from the army. Dr. Lawrence Churchill was called to Camp Tevya in Brookline NH to provide treatment for over 100 children stricken with a stomach disorder. Francis N. Boutelle was reelected president of the Historical Society. George J. Upham, 83, disappeared and later was found wandering aimlessly in the woods. Jane Gobie and Dr. Lawrence A. Churchill were married. Pfc. Earl R. Maxwell, Pfc. Alden Keef, and Pfc. David Frye returned home from serving overseas.

August - Over 2000 people attended the band concert on August 2. Harold E. Reeves, a veteran of WWII, was chosen as the Commander of the Franz Waldo Post, American Legion. According to the *Times*, "Townsend's residents received the news that the war with Japan had come to its end Tuesday night with wild hilarity." Whistles at the Fessenden plant and the Spaulding Fibre plant let loose with ear-splitting blasts. The streets were filled with people, the church bells rang, and "the siren at West Townsend joined in the racket." Hard cider was passed

around, and a fire hose was hooked up to a hydrant and sprayed everywhere. "Sam Woods and Harold Reeves bore the full brunt of the stream." Fessenden employees received two days off with pay in a victory holiday. Townsend stores closed during the Victory Celebration. Rachel W. Bauman, secretary and reporter for the *Times* and *Free Press*, was married the Elbridge G. Cann, editor and publisher of the paper. A fire at the Ralph Rosmulo place in Townsend Harbor destroyed 5000 chicks. Pvt. Robert W. MacMaster returned for a 30 day furlough.

September - Pictures of children were taken free and printed in the *Times*. The school saw record enrollment of 456 children at Spaulding Memorial. John Boucher returned from Pacific duty. The Townsend Hill Farm was razed by an early morning fire, with damages estimated at \$8000. The 11 room house, a combination shed and garage and a large barn were completely destroyed. The family dog Teddy was credited with saving the lives of the family and two house guests by jumping on the bed to wake them up. A 15 year old Townsend youth was arrested for recent breaks at the Clarence O. Webster store in West Townsend. A double wedding at the Methodist joined Lucille Mae Wright and John M. Boucher, USN, while Madeline Louise Wright became the bride of Foster Ralph Wendell. Robert Robichaud bought the family fuel business. Townsend WAC Cpl. Virginia L. Brown returned home from Italy.

October - Henry A. Plett of the Harbor was appointed commander of Legion District Ten. A family dog mistaken for a fox was shot and killed. Robert G. Fessenden died at age 62 after an illness of several months. The Fessenden Plant closed for the remainder of the week. Cpl. Roy E. Johns, USMC, was cited for his service at Iwo Jima.

November - Fire damaged the Ernest Gilson Home with damage at \$1000. Catherine Wornham died at age 42. Vieno Aho and Arvo Aho were married. Pfc. Paul C. Prevost, USN, returned from Pearl Harbor. Cpl. Arthur A. Misner received discharge after 45 months in the Army Air Forces. The Armistice Ball was held November 12 at Memorial Hall. On the stage was a mural of a battle scene in Europe, at the base of which were 17 crosses representing Townsend men who gave their lives in WWI and WWII. The mural was made by Charles Hodgman Sr. of West Townsend. Finance Officer and Mrs. Robert Turner Jr. led the grand march. Amanda Dwight concerts resumed with the end of the war. The Townsend High Seniors presented the comedy drama, "The Mummy and the Mumps." The 1946 Chevrolet arrived at Fessenden garage, but Manager Harry Hotaling says, "I don't even know a price to quote you and I've no idea when you can get a new car." Mr. and Mrs. Emil Salminen were found guilty of trespassing and placed on probation. Charges were brought by Mrs. Bernard W. Morilly, a tenant of the Salminens. Her husband, a greatly decorated soldier, was

serving overseas and had not even seen their 14 month old baby. The Salminens were accused of harassing Mrs. Morilly when she refused to vacate the apartment over the Salminens' store.

December - Discharged were Townsend residents SSgt. William Keefe, Coxswain Donald Weir, and Cpl. Lyle Reynolds. The town dug out from a foot of snow on December 20. The Congregational Church called Rev. Paul E. Syster to serve them. The school board voted to allow Sunday basketball. The community Christmas tree on the common was lighted with colored lights for the first time in three years. Lt. Robert Copeland returned home. Mr. and Mrs. James Hamel celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

1946
January - Elaine Moison, age 7, was injured by a hit and run driver near Webster's store. Bleachers were installed at the Spaulding School gym. Ssgt. Edward Funaiolo was home from the Pacific. Addison Woodward, 30 year treasurer of the town, announced he will not run again. The campaign to fight polio was headed by Major Donald E. Domina, teacher of English at Spaulding.

February - Members of the West Townsend Baptist Church protested Sunday basketball. A four year long delayed Christmas Party was held for Cpl. John McGowan following his discharge at Fort Devens. Arthur E. Burt, oldest resident, died at age 95. Town meeting returned to daytime session. Glenys Toomey was married to Ralph E. Conant. The *Townsend Times* began a sports column by Roy E. Brown, calling it "Bunk's Banter." George J. Upham, age 85, died February 14, and his widow Minnie, age 80, died the day following his funeral. Mr. and Mrs. Toivo Aho celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary.

March - Veterans met to form a VFW post and auxiliary. James A. McNutt was voted commander of the post. Aubrey Wornham and Walter Hamel opened a sporting goods store in the former *Times* Free Press building on Main Street. Lt. Elwin O. Swicker was discharged from the Army Air Forces. The town voted an annual budget of \$138,157.74. Major Clarence H. Christian won the selectman's post. Herman Wheeler, a Brookline World War II veteran, died in a car-bridge accident. Edgar Gilson, a tub turner, lost a finger joint in an accident at Fessenden Co.

April - Charles Boutwell waited for the arrival of his war bride, the former Nancy O'Hallinan of England. They had not seen each other for a year. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Smith celebrated their 50th anniversary. Rev. Fr. Percival J. Quill was honored by a reception to mark his 25th anniversary as a priest. The THS senior class left for a trip to Washington D.C. Herbert Wilson retired from the Fire Department after 40 years. Pavvo Lumppio opened the Townsend Auto Body Shop. Ralph Wilson was a patient in Fitchburg General Hospital with rheumatic fever.

May - Memorial Day observances, suspended during the war, were again to be a part of Townsend's activities. The tax

rate was upped \$3, to \$33 per thousand. Irving W. Pillsbury of Pepperell purchased the business interests of Ernest G. Wilson and was considering opening a funeral home in Townsend. Richard Battin II, former chairman of the Townsend Ration Board, died at Burbank Hospital. John W. McNabb bought the drug store building in Townsend. Rev. Reuben W. Rader was chosen as the new Methodist pastor.

June - Ralph Misner, a WWI veteran and employee at Fessenden for 35 years, died suddenly. 26 seniors received diplomas from Townsend High School. June Sundstrom and John M. Coffee took all the scholastic honors. The engagement of Annabel Broschart of Townsend and Richard E. Lorden of Pepperell was announced. The Methodist Church Sunday School had its annual picnic at the Benson Wild Animal Farm in Hudson NH.

July - The Townsend Military Band played to over 2000 at its first concert of the season. Over 3000 attended one later in the month. Butter, meat, cheese, bacon, and post office box rent were found to have increased since the death of OPA. Amelia Mahla retired from the Post Office. The Sweetheart Ice Cream Bar opened in Townsend Harbor. Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Woodward celebrated their 60th anniversary.

August - Ethel Scott and her 8 year old grandson David Huse narrowly escaped injury when some men in a canoe on the Squannicook River shot at them. Annabel Broschart was given a pre-nuptial shower. Plans were made for the Welcome Home day for returned veterans of World War II on Labor Day. The day featured a parade, firemen's contest, sports events, a concert by the Ashby Band and a ball at Spaulding Memorial. Timothy E. Flarity, who led the Townsend Military Band for over 25 years, was honored by the band with a visit.

September - George Tucker, age 12, was injured by an exploding shell he was playing with. The Jesse Hussey family lost its home and possessions in a fire started by an overheated chimney flue. Baby Sharon was trapped in an upstairs bedroom, but rescued by her mother. The VFW held a benefit for the family. Over \$700 in cash, plus furniture, linen, groceries and clothing were donated to the Hussey family by townspeople. Bradford S. Hubbard, editor of the *Times* since 1937, left to go into the hardware business in Keene, NH.

October - The Clover Farm Store opened in Townsend Harbor. John F. Delay of upper Main Street was installed Commander of the Franz Waldo Miller Post, American Legion. Franklin Morrison, a janitor at Spaulding Memorial School, was burned by an explosion in the science lab, caused by a gas leak. McNabb's Pharmacy opened for business. Rev. John F. Donoghue was named parish priest to succeed Rev. Fr. Percival J. Quill as pastor of St. John's Church.

November - The Townsend High School Senior Class presented "The Fighting Littles." Timothy E. Flarity, one of the town's most prominent citizens, died at age 85. He had been town moderator, and a member of the Townsend Military band for 50 years. The teachers sought a \$500 salary increase, citing the high teacher turnover rate because of lower than average salaries. The Congregational Church made plans for electronic bells.

December - The Woman's Club conducted a Christmas Party for orphans. The teachers were granted a \$200 salary increase. At the present time, elementary teachers received from \$1400 to \$1600 per year, the Junior and Senior high women teachers \$1500 and \$1650, and the men teachers \$1550 and \$1900. The Teachers' Association rejected the increased, and insisted on the \$500 increase. A Special Town Meeting was scheduled to raise the money for the \$200 increase. Chester Going, a fireman, was severely burned in an electrical fire in the Fessenden plant.

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Continued on page 27

Post war life in Townsend

Continued from page 26

1947
January - A Special Town Meeting attended by 100 voters approved \$1000 for temporary teacher salary increases. Sunday sports were approved, and the town voted to accept the Adams Dam property. The teacher salary fight resulted in the resignation of two-third's of Townsend's faculty. Superintendent Charles Robinson was faced with trying to find a dozen teachers before February 1. Later, five of the 12 teachers who resigned had a change of heart. The 7 resignations were accepted. Walter D. Farrar died of a heart attack at Spaulding School, and was found by a student.
February - Six new teachers were named, and only one day was missed. Stephen Keef decided not to run for selectmen, after serving six years. A. Dudley Bagley, Jr. and Byron Jenna ran for the three year term. 16 year old Barbara Goodwin was saved after falling through the ice in the Harbor. Robert Archambault and others assisted her to safety. D.E. Domina, until who recently resigned as an English teacher, was named editor of the Times.

"Cupid's Prom" was held at the high school. A four legged chicken was hatched in Townsend at the J. Sanfred Johnson farm, according to a front page story. Eino Wiik was badly cut by a saw at Fessenden Mill.
March - Jenna won the selectman's post. R.L. Robichaud was elected president of the newly formed Townsend Chamber of Commerce. Rev. Alfred Struthers and his wife Carrie perished in a New Hampshire Fire. The West Townsend Tavern was sold to Ronald Harry. Mr. and Mrs. H.L. Spofford celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary. One of the newly hired teachers quit after a little more than a month. The Townsend VFW celebrated its first anniversary.
April - Henry Kulo was injured seriously in a Fitchburg blast. A minstrel show was planned by Fredd Ross and William Mac-Master. Housewives were told in a Super IGA Market ad that "Your used fat is now worth 16 c per lb. at this store... Bring it here and help relieve the soap shortage." Diphtheria warnings were printed, and toxoid clinics were

held to immunize children. George Thomas Copeland was found drowned in the Adams mill canal after a 3 day search for the 71 year old man. The THS senior class went to Washington D.C. and New York City.
May - A fire almost completely destroyed the old Kilbourn place on Townsend Hill, occupied by John Safford. The contents and home were a total loss with damages estimated at \$2500. Memorial Day was observed. Alice Hotaling and Vera Colt, both 18, were injured in a car accident.
June - Ethel Armstrong directed "Olivet to Calvary," an Easter pageant in the school auditorium. The West Townsend Tavern reopened. The old Boynton Place in West Townsend was bought by Joan Alcorta, Madge Clute and Blendean Clute to operate as the Red Sleigh Tavern. The Town Memorial Committee was formed. The largest class in history of Townsend High School graduated, with 29 members.
July - A barn fire at the George Rossbach farm on Turnpike road destroyed farm machinery, tools

and hay, with the loss estimated at \$5000. "Dancing on the Green" became part of the regular band concerts. 7 year old Bruce Maxwell was injured by the rear wheel of a 20 ton oil truck. He remained unconscious for 16 days, his condition reported as poor. The Rossbach Fund grew and plans were made for a barn raising. Harry Morrison returned as superintendent of the Spaulding Fibre Company. Joseph Reeves bought out his brother's interest in the IGA grocery store. A man who had been living in a tent on Route 119 was accused of beating a three year old boy.
August - Franklin R. Jests died of self-inflicted gunshot wounds. Mrs. Jests was not home at the time, attending the Marshall-Ross wedding. Ethel Amiro, school nurse, reported that an attempt was being made to prevent the spread of whooping cough.
September - A kindergarten nursery opened in West Townsend. Spaulding employees got a 10 percent wage boost. The town celebrated Labor Day with a firemen's muster. Harbor Corner

Continued on page 28



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The late '40's

Continued from page 27

Crossroads was officially named "Spaulding Square." Interest was shown in rebuilding the Adams Dam site.

October - Townsend Harbor Colony of Arts and Crafts hosted a crafts fair. Louise Tarbell Variety Store was sold to Mr. and H. Wheeler. Lt. Gov. Arthur W. Coolidge spoke at the Congregational Church. J. MacDonalds was installed as Noble Grand of North Star IOOF. Youngsters created a disturbance when they made a fake body out of old clothes and put catsup on it and left it by the side of the road near the old CCC camp. The police received many calls reporting a dead body.

November - The world's checker champion came to Memorial Hall for matches and exhibitions. Edwin Larson was elected president of the new Parent-Teacher Association. 200 people attended one meeting of the PTA. A special officer was reprimanded for slapping a 15 year old boy following a Halloween party. He was suspended for four weeks. The Senior Class presented the play "Mama's Baby Boy." The George Rossbachs were given a surprise party in honor of their 10th anniversary. The Times carried the news of the engagement of Princess Elizabeth to Lt. Philip Mountbatten. The Townsend Girl Scouts had a cookie sale, baking the cookies themselves.

December - Spaulding Co. Employees voted against joining the Papermakers Union.

1948
January - Ellis Z. Nutting, a retired executive of the F.W. Woolworth Co., died at age 78. The Townsend Rod and Gun Club approved the repeal of the anti-steel trap law. Ronald I. Harry bought the Modern Music store in Fitchburg from orchestra leader Eddie Hamilton. The March of Dimes Campaign got underway. A budget of \$68,200 was proposed by the Townsend School Committee. The Post War Planning Committee recommended a dam to honor heroes of both World Wars. Fighting a fire at the Fessenden coopeage was made more difficult by the high wind and freezing weather.

February - The Townsend Lions Club held its first meeting, with Lloyd Clark elected president. Nancy Jarvis was the queen of the Winter Carnival sponsored

by the PTA.

March - Town Meeting spent \$180,577 and accepted the Adams Dam project, which would cost \$10,000. Wilfred Hamel was named the new Chief of Police. Three fire companies organized the Townsend Firemen's Association. The Woman's Club put on a Minstrel show.

April - The Woman's Club put on a fashion show. Commissioner Long gave approval for the rebuilding of Adams Dam. The tax rate jumped \$2, up to \$36 per thousand. The Girls Glee Club performed the operetta "The Heartless House." The Couples Club sponsored an essay contest on "What should be done to attract new residents to Townsend." The Methodist Minstrel Show was presented in Memorial Hall. The Lions Club planned a male fashion show. A fire destroyed the former Surette place on Warner Road, Townsend Harbor, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert O. Smith.

May - A petition signed by 252 people was submitted to the selectmen, asking that the ATM vote to rebuild the Adams Dam at Howard Park be rescinded. Cub Scout Pack 11 held an orange crate derby from the top of Highland street. James Egan saved the life of his two year old son John by using artificial respiration after the youngster had been rescued from a four foot deep canal. A record Special Town Meeting approves rebuilding Adams Dam 347 to 168.

June - A class of 25 graduated from Townsend High school. The Congregational Church held a hobby show. The Townsend Lions Club sponsored the purchase of a respirator for the fire department.

July - The home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert MacMaster was struck by lightning, and the occupants were nearly hit by the bolt. Virginia May of West Townsend was thinking about heading to Hollywood. 13 year old Philip Burke was killed by a milk truck which went out of control. Engineers' plans were nearly ready for reconstruction of Adams Dam, which would make a swimming hole in the Squannicook. Bruce Larson, age 9, turned into a hero when he save a 15 year old from drowning in Springfield. The Townsend Center post office was proposed for remodelling and



Gather together...The Orthodox Congregational Church, built in 1830.

heating.

August - John H. Williams was found guilty in the fatal milk truck crash which killed Philip Burke. Townsend Rod and Gun Club held a Field Day. Ray Sawyer was elected Legion Commander. Official selective service registration dates were announced by Governor Bradford.

September - Donald E. Domina, former editor of the Townsend Times and teacher at Spaulding, returned to Army Duty. Spaulding School reopened with nearly 500 students. The Firemen's Muster featured races and competitions. A call went out by the Townsend Chamber of Commerce for Townsend families to offer rooms and apartments to Fort Devens soldiers and their families. 93 member were registered in the draft program. The School Committee recommended an addition of at least six rooms to Spaulding Memorial.

October - Rev. M. Harry Butler resigned as pastor of the First Baptist Church, West Townsend. A firebug was setting woodland fires.

November - With 1079 of the 1421 voters casting their ballots, Townsend voted wet on all three liquor questions, "making the town open for bar rooms, beer parlors, of whatever the Selectmen decide to license." On the presidential ballot, Townsend voted 691 for Dewey and Warren, 342 for Truman and Barkley. Dr. Churchillville moved his office to the brick round house on Main Street. An Townsend car accident nearly claimed the life of Ashby teacher Willis Gray, 25, of Littleton.

December - The new fire truck for the Harbor Fire Company arrived. Helmi Luoma, who operated Helen's Beauty Shoppe over Tenney's store, was the victim of murder by her husband Toivo Luoma in Florida. He then turned the gun on himself. Dick Hill's orchestra played for "St. Nick's Promenade" in the Spaulding gym. The Legion post decided not to apply for a liquor license. The selectmen were deluged with liquor license seekers. The Lions Club built a Christmas scene on the village green. Vandals caused extensive damage to town property on the Common, with culprits breaking the tree lights and smashing chairs stored under the bandstand. The new Electron Bell at the Congregational Church added to the Christmas season.

1949
January - The new police cruiser was delivered. The skating rink sponsored by the Woman's Club was ready for freezing weather. Howard Barkhouse was installed as Master of the Townsend Grange. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Ballow celebrated their 50th

Wedding anniversary. Vernon and Oliver Smith suffered a loss of more than \$5000 when fire gutted their West Townsend home. Many children were out of school due to Measles and chicken pox.

February - The PTA again held a Winter Carnival. The Townsend School Committee approved a budget of \$75,800. The Grange presented a minstrel show under the direction of Mrs. Ruth Frank. Anna May was pianist. Dave Ganong bought the Economy Store of the Stop and Shop grocery chain, and planned to operate New England Grocery. Winston Miracle was the new pastor for the Baptist Church. Walter Wilson was president of the Firemen's Association. Trouble at basketball games caused the School Committee to vote for the severing of athletic relations with Lunenburg. The next week the Lunenburg squabble was called off after a joint meeting of the two school boards. An addition was proposed to the Groton Community Hospital.

March - The Ronchen Inn in West Townsend, operated by Mr. and Mrs. R.I. Harry, reopened for the season. Ron Harry was made organist of the Methodist church. A posse hunted for little Richard Valcourt, age 4, in the woods. After being missing for two hours, the child was found plodding along the road. The Woman's Club presented "Gold in the Hills." Vernon Smith was chosen VFW Commander. Daniel B. Ormsby sold his garage to Jenney Mfg. Co. The VFW held a minstrel show.

April - The Board of Health imposed a \$50 fine for dumping garbage. The West Side Package Store opened. Stephen Keefe Jr. was the new proprietor of the Ormsby Garage.

May - The Townsend High School Glee Club presented the comedy operetta "Meet Arizona." The May Children's festival sponsored by all four churches was held on the Common, complete with parade and a tableau. The Junior Prom was titled "Oceanic Spray." Property owners on the old Fessenden sewer line met to discuss sewage problems. School authorities considered a plan for a possible regional high school. Attending the meeting were representatives from Pepperell, Townsend, Westford, Ashby and Lunenburg. Robert E. Smith retired as Center Postmaster.

June - The first Band Concert was held June 17. 29 seniors graduated from Townsend High School. Rev. Herbert F. Fulton was welcomed as the new pastor of the Methodist Church. Robert Robichaud was elected president of the Lions Club. Louis Josselyn Jr. of the Harbor left for Halifax, Nova Scotia, to try out with the Liverpool baseball club. The band

received a P.A. system from the Couples Club. Richard Rutherford, former Townsend high school athletic star, was signed to take over coaching duties at Spaulding Memorial. Adams Dam work began. 600 men staged a riot during a stag party at the Maja hall in Ashby when the hired strippers refused to strip, saying they didn't like the men's attitude. Damage was estimated at \$500. Also reported in the Times, Groton High School hired former Providence college star athlete Steve Fallon as teacher-coach.

July - The Fessenden Company Plant closed for a week because of vacations. Police Chief Wilfred E. Hamel was called to the H.L. Scott store to quell a disturbance when group of boys age 9 to 16 picketed the place carrying signs which said "This Store Unfair to the Gang," and "Unfair to So-called Nickel Customers." The Adams Dam job was completed by the San Vel Company in just three weeks and two days. The Legion post was renamed the Miller-Terrell Post No. 199. A pipe leak at Memorial Hall ruined drums belong to the Townsend Girl Scouts drum and bugle corps. The Laitinen barn was destroyed by lightning. The class of 1899 Townsend High School held its 50th anniversary. All five of the remaining members attended (two had died). Only 40 voters out of 1417 registered showed up at town meeting to take action on appropriation of \$200,000 for an addition to Spaulding Memorial. The meeting was postponed.

August - Eleven people were stung by wasps. The E. A. Spaulding Rebekah lodge, the Daughters of Union Veterans, and the Gold Star Mothers' Association sponsored the weekly lawn parties in August. Richard Hiell smashed up his car and was injured. M.P. Billings was named as the new superintendent of the Ashby-Lunenburg-Townsend schools. Nine year old Nancy Fanning came down with polio. A child was killed by a truck during a wedding reception. Albert Lavature of West Townsend was elected president of the newly formed Townsend Athletic Association. Thieves entered Memorial Hall and stole several Civil War pistols. Two missing tots were found safe and sound by a collie.

September - Wilfred Hamel resigned as Chief of Police, and Sgt. Aubrey K. Wornham served as acting chief. The school opened with 539 students. 200 voters turned up for the STM to vote \$201,000 for a new school. A free chest X-ray program was held, with 1306 attending. Three boys stole and wrecked a car owned by a Fitchburg man.

October - A new RFD Route serving 200 families was set up in West Townsend, announced by

Hazel Tenney, postmaster. The selectmen named D.R. Morse of Pepperell as police chief. The Methodist Church put on a 100th anniversary celebration. Nearly 100 people attended the selectmen's meeting to protest the appointment of an out-of-town chief of police instead of Sgt. Wornham. A shortage of leaders created doubt as to the future of Boy Scouting in Townsend. A Winchendon boy died of polio.

November - The Senior class presented "June Mad," a three act comedy. The Chamber of Commerce asked for 30 minute parking on Main Street. A barn owned by Mr. and Mrs. Peter Barbera on Dudley road was completely destroyed, along with a 1940 Ford Sedan and eight hens. The PTA held a barn dance.

Under the new minimum wage law, Townsend had to pay teachers at least \$1800 a year. Marie Arline MacMaster and Rev. Herbert F. Fulton, pastor of the Townsend Methodist Church, were married. Cold weather cut off the water supply to many homes. Locations were set up for homeowners to draw water.

December - Rev. David McDonald, a Fitchburg minister, was hospitalized after his car plunged into the Squannicook river. Dick Spofford became a state trooper. The Harbor firemen sponsored a Christmas party for children. The steel strike caused lay-offs at the coopeage plant at Fessenden. Waino Oja was found guilty of accosting a person of the opposite sex with offensive and disorderly language. He had told his estranged wife, living with a female friend, to "get out of that pig pen." The Lions Club put up an impressive Santa and Reindeer display on the Common.

1950
January - Brookside eggs were advertised at 46 cents a dozen. Robert Leahy and Marilyn Roderick were chosen as King and Queen of the Mardi Gras sponsored by the Townsend PTA. The Reeves Market was sold to the IGA store company. The Times reported that Pepperell Tax Collector Duane P. McDuffee and John L. Cotter, candidate for selectman, were found not guilty of assault and battery on each other.

February - The school board asked an \$8000 budget raise for operating costs. Ron Harry was playing nightly expect Mondays at the Ronchen Inn, West Townsend. Specials included filet Mignon for \$1.50.

March - Richard F. Powell sold his hardware store to a Newton man. It was reported that the national coal shortage would have no effect on Spaulding Memorial. Harold Dik was named chairman of the selectman. Robert L. Robichaud was elected new selectmen. The town voted to spend \$219 for the year. John McNabb was elected president of the Townsend Chamber of Commerce. Two boys age 9 and 10 wrecked a summer camp on South road. Harold Adams was named chairman of the School Committee. Women could now join the Townsend Athletic Association. Lois Kamunen was elected president of the Townsend VFW Auxiliary. The tax rate jumped \$6, to \$44 per thousand. The Townsend High school Glee Club presenting "HMS Pinafore." John G. Kelley was appointed postmaster at the center post office. Stanley B. Fessenden and his wife sailed to Europe for a six week vacation.

April - Gertrude Copeland, for many years the town accountant, passed away. A man threw himself in front of a car in a suicide attempt. Baron Hugo and His Band played for the annual Spring Dance at Spaulding Memorial School. The Townsend

Continued on page 29

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Townsend in the '50's

Continued from page 28

Rod and Gun Club came out against any open season on pheasants. Engineers favored a stop light at the junctions of Routes 119 and 13. A fire badly damaged the home of Mr. and Mrs. Alberton Kendal, Townsend Harbor. Overcrowding at Spaulding school led to a proposal to use Memorial Hall for classroom space.

May - West Townsend teen Martha E. Wilson won the preliminary broadcast of "Forum for Living," the safety quiz for college scholarships. A stop light installed at the junction of Routes 119 and 13 would cost about \$5000, to be paid by the state. The junior prom was called "Cinderella Hop." Billy Marquis was named junior fishing champ. George Lindgren was installed a PTA president. The Townsend Athletic Association held a field day and Maypole. Memorial Day ceremonies were held in spite of rain.

June - Martha Farrar attended Girls State. Two 15 year old boys broke into the "Sandwich In." Townsend population was announced at 2807, a gain of over 700 in the past decade. Rev. John D. MacEachern, pastor of St. John's Catholic Church, celebrated 25 years in the priesthood. 31 seniors graduated from Townsend High School. The Harbor Mansion opened for the summer, part as an antique sales room and part museum. A lightning bolt narrowly missed Mr. and Mrs. Charles Walsh of Sterns Road in their home.

July - Firefighters were called to two fires at once the morning of July 4. Plans for an addition to Spaulding Memorial School would soon be ready, announced Rep. Earle S. Bagley. Plans were announced to improve Howard Park. Lt. Col. Green was reported hurt in the Korean War. The Adams House was sold to Harry F. Knight of Townsend Harbor, who planned to open a modern funeral home there. New regulations required pasteurization of milk, announced by the Board of Health, to take effect January 1, 1951. Charles Conner, Charles Kilbourn, and Larry Conner joined the U.S. Navv. Plans were

underway to partition the banquet room at Memorial Hall into classrooms to handle overflow from Spaulding Memorial. The School Committee inspected and rejected the Banner Press building for possible school use.

August - Traffic lights were installed at he center. A Special Town Meeting was called for school emergency funds. Voters protested the abandonment of the little used Meeting Road.

September - The VFW held a home talent show. The body of an unidentified man was discovered in a car near Brookline Road, and a rubber hose connected to the exhaust pipe led into the car. The army needed rooms for soldiers' families. First grade at Spaulding Memorial had three sets of twins, all boys, in two classes. 543 students attended the first day of school. \$40,000 more was needed for the Spaulding addition, after bids were read. The \$40,000 loan was approved in a ten minute STM. A poll of 1700 people in Townsend, Groton, Pepperell, Shirley and Ayer showed that 95 percent felt Groton Community Hospital was too small, and those polled favored a new hospital. Fessenden's announced a change from piece work to day work and an hourly pay increase. Men receiving 85 cents per hour would now receive a dollar, and the dollar men would get \$1.15. The School Committee awarded the bid for Spaulding School to Poley Abrams Corp. In a surprise visit, Huntley N. Spaulding, ex-governor of NH, dropped in at the school for a look around.

October - Congressman Edith Nourse Rogers expressed interest in a new hospital plan at a meeting held concerning the Groton Hospital. Voters were told to defeat Referendum 5, which would cost rural motorists millions of dollars in insurance. Lt. Gov. Charles F. (Jeff) Sullivan stopped by one afternoon to see his friend Frank J. Baumis. The state said it would build a new Main Street Bridge across the Squannicook River. Work on the addition to Spaulding would begin soon, according to the Times. The Police Station moved to Main Street. Substantial subscriptions



Rub-a-dub-dub...Built in 1849, this building was used by A.M. White's Tub Shop in West Townsend. Used later by other businesses, it burned down in 1944.

totally \$52,226 to the \$425 needed for the new Groton Hospital were reported by George T. Skinner of Groton, chairman of the fund's memorial gifts committee.

November - A factory was planned for the Banner Press building. Ron Harry left to join the Air Force. A storm shower was held for Laura Rossbach by the WSCS. The town retained its wet status and voted Republican, with a 75 percent voter turnout. The Grant Plastics Factory opened up in the Banner Press building. The uniform auto insurance rate, called "the insurance robbery plan" in the Times, was defeated 1033 to 23 in a landslide, following suit with the rest of the state. The Townsend High Seniors presented "Honor Bright." Named to the local Polio Committee were Mrs. Edmund Wright, Mrs. Flora Southwick, and Mrs. Walter Hamel. Dr. and Mrs. Richard S. Elys were honored at a testimonial in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary. The school board voted a \$150 cost of living increase for the teachers. Charles A. Laakso was fatally injured when hit by a car in Worcester. A Pepperell man who was drafted was jailed for refusing to take the oath at the Army Base induction center. He was jailed under \$1000 bail. The surgical suite at the new Groton Community Hospital would be dedicated in memory of Dr. A.G. Kilbourn.

December - Work on the Main Street Bridge began. The Times

carried weekly reports of donations to the new hospital fund. A handy 12 page A-Bomb booklet was distributed to every family in the state. The booklet graphically outlined what persons should do in case of an atomic attack. Center Pontiac Service was sold by Lewis Kleinberg to Miller Motors of Fitchburg. The day after Christmas, the Elm Street section lost power when a transformer blew out, caused, said Line Foreman Graham Blood, "by the stoves, roasters, radios, TV sets, trains and many electric gadgets received as Christmas presents."

January - Red Cross announced plans to train for Civil Defense. Kenneth Wilson and Martha Farrar were chosen King and Queen of the PTA winter Carnival. A sendoff party was given to Raymond Valcourt, Richard Spaulding and Wilfred Valcourt, Jr, who were soon to be inducted into the army.

February - Heavy rains flooded many cellars, and the fire department had to pump them out. Stanley "Pat" Conner of Townsend Harbor, age 30, was killed in a Fitchburg car accident. A stag party was held at the Legion Hall for new servicemen, including Doug Larson, Tom Lindgren, Bob Dik, Aubrey Wornham Jr., and Ralph Baer. Milton C. Paige resigned as selectman. Assessor Joseph Arlin was pinned under a tree for four hours and suffered injuries and shock.

March - Nine year old Mary Hamel was shot in the eye by an air rifle. The Townsend Athletic Association presented a play, "Silas." Arthur F. Verney and Bernard W. Brown were elected to the Board of Selectmen. Ben Poor resigned as Superintendent of Streets. The Girl Scouts Bugle Corps disbanded. Town Meeting voted to spend over 263,000. Dick Rutherford, a teacher and coach at the school, was recalled to service in the Army Air Corps. Henry S. Albro died at the age of 77. Pfc. Ron Harry was injured in a car accident. Dr. Fred A Davis, Pepperell veterinarian, was surprised with a party in honor of his 50 years as a vet.

April - The PTA sponsored a Chataqua. Lack of steel delayed the Main Street bridge project. Louis Dodge was elected commander of the Townsend VFW. Cedric Misner took over the post of Highway Superintendent. The 4-H put on an exhibit of their skills. Father MacEachern left. The new pastor was Rev. John J. Hughes. William May was elected head of the PTA.

May - Ground was broken for the new Groton Community Hospital. The PTA put on a "Womanless Wedding," during the Crazy Daze talent show. Appearing in the play were Charles Monahan, Bill Klingenberg, Win Richter, William May, Kauko T. Johnson as the bride, Rouy Cowdrey, John Merrill as the JP., Ralph Hayward, Bob Tumber, Walter Peterson as the groom, Edwin Manson, John Owen and Clayton Kirk. Attempted railroad sabotage was investigated. The THS Chorus presented "Tulip Time." The Junior Prom was "Starlight Fantasy." The Senior Prom was "High Hat Promenade."

The tax rate jumped to \$52 per thousand, an increase of \$8.

June - Anderson's Feed Store opened in Townsend. Cynthia Ryan won a \$500 Rotary Scholarship. 32 graduated from THS. Townsend School opened its doors. Frank Perina was reported wounded in Korean action. Red Wilson planned to operate the Center Service garage. The Police Department bought a popcorn machine for the summer band concerts. Wilfred J. LeBlanc, 19, was killed in a tractor accident in Fitchburg. The Townsend Stamp Club held an exhibition.

July - The State Police closed down three gambling concession at a Lions Club carnival in Pepperell, according to the Times. The games were a penny pitch, a ball cup, and a duck pond. Work was slow on the Maude E. Hyde Memorial Gate at Hillside Cemetery. The Rabbit Club met. Elwin T. Dodd was arrested following a stabbing fracas at the Owl's Club in Pepperell. Victim of the stabbing was Eugene F. Ethier, manager of the club. Bail was set at \$5000. Nancy Fanning, age 10 who had infantile paralysis in 1949, was making a good recovery and attended a month at Camp Caravan. Roland Spofford, 5, was saved from drowning by Lionel Penigny. Frank Wornham was rescued from drowning when his canoe overturned, too.

August - Dr. Maurice A Barton resigned as chairman of the Townsend Red Cross unit. Major Domina was promoted to Lt. Col. Groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Groton Community Hospital were held. A party was held for Mary Patricia Keef, who was to enter a convent in September. Ron Harry was home on leave, and played the organ at the Ronchen Inn during dinner hours. Dr. Abraham Goldfarb was injured in a car accident. Five were arrested on gaming charges in a raid by state police on Ted's Bowling Alley in Pepperell. The owner of a barber shop in Ayer was also arrested at the same time. A farewell party was held for Erving Marshall, a member of the Townsend Police Department, as he had been recalled to duty with the U.S. Navy. 20 employees of the Truckstell Manufacturing Company, Baumis Mfg. Div, went on strike for several weeks, but later returned to work. Richard Collette was home after being discharged from the Navy.

September - Work on the six room addition to Spaulding Memorial School was completed, but opening was delayed. Townsend High School opened with 129 students. Gilman Conant was named Master of the Townsend Grange. The Townsend Athletic Association made plans to build a grandstand at the ball field. Civil Defense canvassed homes in Townsend to determine how many could be cared for in Townsend in the event of an atomic attack on the Boston area.

October - The Townsend Legion post was denied a liquor license after a group of 40 citizens headed by Rev. Winston B. Marcie, pastor of the Baptist Church, and Walter Davis of Ashby attending a hearing to protest it. Mabel Landray was elected president of automobile accident. He had been a school committee member, and a member of the police dept. John MacDonald of West Townsend celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary. T. J. Harvey, Congregational Church Treasurer since 1901, was honored during services.

1952
January - Prices were upped for Spaulding school lunches from 20 cents to a quarter. Dick Boucher's naval vessel was reported hit, but no one was hurt. Julie Farrar continued her school news column in the Times, "Spaulding Scribbles."

February - Oskar Tokoi, ex-premier of Finland and resident of Townsend, addressed a Finnish rally in New York. Lyman E. Bennet was elected president of the Chamber of Commerce.

March - The town passed a budget of 252,015 at Annual Town Meeting. "Heartless House," a 3 act opera, was presented by the Girls' Glee Club. A restriction on pet dogs was requested after a pack of dogs attacked and killed a number of deer. The School Committee gave a special citation to honor Ellen Whitcome, who retired after 23 year of teaching in the town. Eugene Woodward celebrated his

100th birthday.
April - Mr. and Mrs. John Gwinn celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary. The American Legion again asked for a beer and wine license. Harvey Joudrey was elected Commander of the VFW. A fire truck was requested for West Townsend, which had been getting by on a 24 year old truck.

May - The TAA presented "The Nut Farm." Father John J. Hughes, 52 and pastor of St. John's parish, died suddenly at the rectory. Rev. Bernard J. O'Rourke was appointed new pastor. 8500 trout were released in local streams. Herbert Wilson, 76, passed away. West Townsend got its fire truck. Memorial Day ceremonies were held.

June - Baccalaureate services for Townsend High School were held at the Congregational church. 25 seniors received diplomas. Ayer planned to open a new town park. Work started on the new grandstand at Fessenden field. The town selectmen got individual name plates for their meeting room.

July - Mary Smith retired as postmaster at Townsend Harbor. The towns' oldest couple, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene O Woodward (ages 100 and 101), observed their 66th anniversary.

August - The Times reported that Police Chief Harold C. King served a summons to Pepperell Selectman John L. Cotter to appear in court for violating the state laws on payment of wages. Cotter had refused to approve the weekly payroll of the police department because certain officers were, as he said, unfit for duty. Cotter was found guilty, and the judge ruled payroll signing was mandatory. He was fined \$10 and appealed it. Marcia Maxwell was elected president of the Legion auxiliary. An Andover man died at the wheel of his automobile after being stopping for speeding along Townsend's Main Street.

Brawling and disorder marked a hearing on whether to remove Agnes Swart as Pepperell's welfare agent.

September - An African missionary addressed the annual Missionary Conference at the Baptist Church in West Townsend. The TAA raised funds to give Charlie Johnson a TV set and a typewriter in appreciation of his efforts in sports promotion in the area. Townsend got a kindergarten and nursery school, operating at Odd Fellows Hall. A wave of house breaks hit the area.


October - The Harbor Post office was closed. Dr. Richard S. Ely died at his home. Margaret Blair Johnstone, pastor of the Union Congregational Church and the Christian Union Church in Groton, wrote an instructional article on sex for Collier's Magazine. A drive was underway to raise \$200,000 for the Groton Community Hospital. Dr. and Mrs. Albert Rosenberg moved into their new Dutch colonial house on Main Street opposite the school at the center.

November - A record breaking total of 1496 voters of 1773 registered went to the polls in the Legion auxiliary. A growing shortage o quarters, nickels and pennies forced a strict rationing of coins in the East. Citizens were urged to empty their piggy banks. Steel finally arrived for the Main Street Bridge. Donald Dyer and Florence Reynolds represented the town for the King and Queen titles for Groton Hospital's "Crazy Daze." 100 children attended a Halloween Party given by the Harbor Homemakers at the Harbor Church. John Haven dressed as a pig, John Creighton as Uncle Sam, Richard Holohan as a tramp, Beverly Cote as an angel, and Richard Newcombe as a scarecrow. November - The Fessenden house, on the north side of the Center Common, was purchased by the Catholic church. Funeral services were held for Herman Abo. Sr. The senior class put on the play "Doctor's Orders." Ron Harry played on the Armed Forces Review radio program on a national radio network. Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm McCullough took over the H.L. Cott store. The TAA made plans for a teen age club. A \$200 salary boost was given to Townsend teachers. The new bridge on Main street opened.

December - The new Harbor fire truck driven by Cedrick Misner was hit by a car when answering a call. Maurice P. Billings was given a new three year contract as superintendent of Townsend, Lunenburg and Ashby schools. The Grange held an Old Timers night. Arthur V. Martin, 57, was seriously injured in a fall

Continued on page 30

CONGRATULATIONS TOWNSEND TIMES - 70 YEARS!



LEOMINSTER HOSPITAL

5K RUN AND HEALTH WALK

Sunday, May 17, 1992

11:00 a.m.

Leominster Hospital

Route 12, Hospital Road

Leominster, MA

80 Years

in

Partnership for Health

Sponsored in part by the Leominster Hospital Medical/Dental Staff and the Montachusett T&G.

Directions:	Leominster Hospital is located on Route 12 one block south of Route 2 (Exit 31A).
Parking:	Is available at the Water Tower Shopping Plaza, across from the Hospital and 1/2 block North on route 12.
Course:	The course is a flat loop through the downtown area and neighborhoods of the city. TAC certified.
Divisions:	Timing and scoring by The Central Mass Striders.
Awards:	Six female and male divisions (19 and under, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60+)
	\$100 cash and trophy to the top male and female over all winners.
	Other prizes to be awarded on a percentage of finishers basis to top divisional finishers.
Amenities:	All pre-registered entrants will receive a T-Shirt (deadline May 8). The first 200 runners to register will receive a sun visor. Mile splits. Water station. Post-race refreshments.
History:	In 1992 Leominster Hospital celebrates its 80th year in Partnership for Health with the community. This 5K race and walk is part of a series of Happy Birthday events to promote wellness and good health. Activities for families, children and seniors will also be held at the Hospital from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Entry Fee:	\$3.00 pre-entry, \$5.00 post entry.
Entry:	Mail pre-entries to: Leominster Hospital Department of Public Relations 200 Hospital Road P.O. Box 2004 Leominster, MA 01453-8004
	Make checks payable to Leominster Hospital.
Information:	Phone the Public Relations Department at Leominster Hospital at 840-1540 or 537-6488.

Leominster Hospital's 80th Birthday 5K Race and Health Walk

Please enter me in Leominster Hospital's 5K Race and Health Walk. I agree to assume all responsibility for and all risk of damage or injury that may occur to me as a participant in this event. In consideration of being accepted as an entrant in Leominster Hospital's 5K Race and Health Walk, I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, release and discharge any and all individuals and organizations associated with the race from all claims, damages, rights of action, present or future, whether the same be known, anticipated, or unanticipated, resulting from or arising out of, or in incident to, my participation in this event. I hereby certify that I will not participate in Leominster Hospital's 5K Race and Health Walk unless I am physically fit and sufficiently trained for competition in the race. I also grant permission for the use of my name and/or picture in any broadcast, photograph or other account of this race.

Signature: _____ Age day of race: _____

Name (please print): _____ M: _____ F: _____

Address _____

Town, State, Zip Code: _____

Running Club: _____

T-Shirt: M _____ L _____ XL _____

The '50's

Continued from page 29

from a trestle at the Fessenden plant. The 1952 School budget was set at \$112,479. Col. and Mrs. Ronald I. Harry leased the Ronchen Inn to Alexander R. Ferrazza, previously a chef at the Bull Run in Shirley. Ernest Whittier West, 45, died of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning in his garage. Pfc. Henry LaRoche arrived home to spend Christmas with his parents in a chartered plane. The Wren Cafe was bought by a Lunenburg man. Postmaster John G. Kelly and Janet Edmunds were married. Mr. and Mrs. K.T. Johnson bought the rectory of St. John's church.

Herbert F. Wheeler died in an Townsend. Eisenhower and Nixon received 1122 votes, while Stevenson and Sparkman received 301. The senior class presented "Three Misses and a Myth." Daughters of Civil War Vets chose delegates. John J. McNabb obtained the Reeves block and U.S. Post office lease. The Firemen's Ball drew 200.

December - The Teachers Association presented a new salary schedule plan, starting at \$2600, with a maximum of \$4200. The new Townsend Masonic Club was named "The Henry Price Masonic Club" in memory of the first grand master in Colonial days, who was also a Townsend resident. Santa arrived on a fire truck in the Harbor. The PTA presented a Community Christmas Program. Townsend Grange observed its 60th anniversary with three charter members still active, Minnie L. Knight, Florence Conant and Galen Proctor. Six children narrowly escaped injury when a car skidded into a telephone pole at a West Townsend bus stop. When a closet fire destroyed the Christmas presents of the Charles Koch family, the Congregational Church, town merchants, three fire companies, and others gave nearly \$200 to the family to replace the gifts.

January - Ron Harry joined Larry Green's Orchestra. The VFW presented the new revue "Shooting Stars," directed by Margaret Hastings. John J. Giordano, proprietor of the Townsend Lunch, acquired the Wyman block, with plans to remodel and build an ultra modern diner on the hotel lot. Carolyn Wyeth and Leon S. Marshall Jr. were chosen Queen and King for the PTA carnival ball. Townsend officials acted quickly to help Mr. and Mrs. Williams and their children when they were evicted from their home after failing to pay the rent, housing them in the VFW hall temporarily.

February - The Williams family found a home in the Harvard-Devens village at Fort Devens, in quarters normally reserved for NCOs. Townsend citizens contributed food and money to help the family. The Wren and Triangle cafes were broken into.

March - Voters approved formation of a Planning Board for the Town. Lynn Miller wrote a column on coming events in Townsend for the *Times*. Town Moderator Earle Bagley was appointed Town Counsel. Also among the appointments: the Soldiers' burial agent - James F. Smith, Moth Superintendent - Leon H. Ballou (who was also appointed Inspector of animals and slaughtering), Culler of hoops and staves - Waldo Leahy and William Reeves, and Surveyor of wood, bark and Lumber - Howard Doran and Lloyd B. Clark.

April - Rev. Winston B. Maricle resigned as pastor of the First Baptist Church. Richard F. Rutherford returned to teach and coach in the Townsend Schools. 1000 fishermen attended the trout derby at the South Fitchburg Club.irate parents invaded the School Committee meeting to demand school bus service to

Kaneoke Court. The dozen parents, mostly new citizens of Townsend, protested that the bus passed right by their road but didn't pick up their children. They had been led to believe their part of town had bus service when they bought their homes. Fessenden Company, which produced barrels, pails, tubs and lumber, became unionized. Nine month old Wanda Soule swallowed a pin, but it was safely removed at the hospital. Grant Plastics was told to change its method of water disposal.

May - The North Middlesex Police Assn. held a ball at Spaulding Memorial School, with Ken Reeves orchestra furnishing the music. The VFW planned to renovate the Old Cemetery. A Civil Defense air raid alarm was sounded on May 14. Mrs. Samuel Albro was elected president of the Woman's Club. Townsend's Helen Renda had just returned from Europe and was chosen "Miss Fitchburg."

June - The *Times Free Press* changed publishers. Charles W. Goodwin and William H. Hastings were the new owners. George and Laura Rossbach, long known as Townsend's most industrious dairy farmers, lost their barn to fire for the second time in six years. The Townsend Post Office was renovated. "Invaders from Mars" was playing at the movies.

July - The Townsend Woman's Club sponsored a Country Fair and band concert. *Times* readers enjoyed a newsy new column called "Along Main Street" by Elsie Lowe. 78 year old Edwin Smith lost his way in the woods near the Maurice Hamel place while picking berries. The Conant House, known as "The Old Mansion" in Townsend Harbor, was given to the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities by Mrs. Leslie T. Stow. The state planned to spend \$35,000 to expand facilities at Willard Brook State Forest. The Wren cafe burned down. The Congregational Church was damaged by two small boys age 7 and 10.

August - Helen Renda competed in the Miss Massachusetts Contest. 11 year old Walter Rossbach, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Rossbach, suffered severe internal injuries when he tripped and fell on a home made wooden gun. He was said to be recovering. *Times* writer Elsie Lowe did a feature story on Mary Albro of West Townsend and her three weeks on a freighter in the West Indies and Dutch Guiana. The Police Department planned a move to Memorial Hall. Helen Renda entertained at Whalom.

September - Townsend resident Sgt. Henry R. Franklin, a POW since 1950, was released from Camp 3, Korea. He arrived home after three years away. He became reacquainted with his two young sons. All outdoor fires were banned by Fire Chief Walter Leonard due to drought conditions. First day of school saw 643 students attending Townsend schools. The VFW announced the purchase of the former Vernon Smith property in West Townsend. Plans were to develop the pond into a swimming pool and skating rink. Later, a home for the post was to be built there. Evelyn Warren celebrated her 91st birthday. A petition for more buses on the Fitchburg Townsend line was given to the selectmen.

October - All Townsend's veterans of the Korean war were honored at the "welcome home" parade and party for Sgt. Henry F. Franklin, returning Korean War POW. The Townsend National Bank was robbed by two young men, who escaped with \$5000. Minnie Knight was honored for her 50 years of service to the Grange. Brian Colby was honored



Pins and needles...The Elsa Williams, Inc. Factory on Scales Lane, manufacturers of needlework kits.



Boxed in...This Martin Corrugator was used at the Bates Box Corrugated Box Corp. on Scales Lane.

as outstanding scout of the year. Rev. Charles Shelly was welcomed as Baptist pastor. The Maude Hyde Memorial Building, an addition to the Congregational Church, was dedicated.

November - The Seniors presented their play, "Come out of your Coma." A 19 year old Air Force AWOL confessed to the Townsend National Bank Robbery. Ora Smith, a teacher in local schools for 29 years, died. The School Committee worried about the growing school enrollment.

December - The Water Extension Committee recommended 27,000 feet of new water mains be built over the next nine years. The *Times* reported that Channel 2, an educational television station, would begin broadcasting soon. Rev. Sherman Goodwin, 86, retired pastor of the Congregational Church, died in the Grayson rest home in Pepperell. Appearing as angels in the school's Christmas pageant were Judy Niemi, Sandra Aro, Betty Tenney, Judy Wiljanen, James Francoeur, Wayne Smith, George Sullivan and Danny Arsenault.

1954

January - Mr. and Mrs. Fred Tenney celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary. Sgt. Charles Dyer received a citation from the army of the Republic of Korea for meritorious service. Three local service stations were broken into in one night.

February - Ronald I. Harry, age 60, proprietor of the Ronchen Inn at West Townsend, died suddenly. The American Legion sought aid for Korean orphans. The PTA sponsored a Winter Circus and Snow Ball. The Board of Selectmen issued a 30 restraining period for all dogs.

March - A record town meeting with an overflow crowd of 700 battled for 5½ hours at Memorial Hall to keep the tax rate rise down. The tax rate was now \$61 per thousand. The total budget was \$313,643. Winning the race for selectman was Louis G. Dodge.

April - The Townsend Youth Organization was founded, with plans for a basketball program. The Couples Club paid for bandstand repairs.

May - Fishing was prohibited from three bridges in town as a safety measure. The High School orchestra and chorus presented "Spring Symphony." Four Norway maple trees were planted in front of Spaulding Memorial School, and dedicated to the classes of 1954, 1955, 1956, and 1957 of Townsend High School. Mrs. Sherman Comstock was

presented by Albert Anderson, but argued against by Willard A. Greer, chairman of the Finance Board. The old CCC camp was opened for hunting. Albert Anderson resigned from the Townsend School Building Committee. Home owners on Scott Road protested the condition of that road. Ashby voters showed interest in a regional school. A 14 ton Dodge fire truck was reportedly taken on a wild ride by a young Ashby man, resulting in \$3000 damage. The work of putting the apparatus back together would take four weeks.

November - The young man accused of stealing the fire truck was charged with larceny and breaking and entering. The three appointed to the Regional School Planning Committee were Hollis Hathaway, Willard A. Greer, and Albert Anderson, but Anderson, already a member of the School Committee, rejected the appointment because of time constraints. An FBI counterspy spoke at Fitchburg high school under the auspices of the Townsend Woman's Club, telling the crowd that knowledge is the best protection from Communism. First grade pupils were projected to exceed the estimate by far. A new market was opened by Francis E. Leland in the Harbor. Ashby appointed a School Problem Study Committee to explore a regional high school. McNabb Pharmacy expanded.

December - The Townsend School Committee developed six possible building plans. The young man arrested for stealing the fire truck was found not guilty by a grand jury in Cambridge. An article two weeks later stated that he was found guilty in Ayer court of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of liquor and fined \$100. While the young man had admitted to stealing the vehicle, on the charge of theft his attorney filed a plea of double jeopardy. The PTA presented a nativity program, "The Christmas Crib," under the direction of Salvatore Viggiano. Aubrey Wornham shot a 200 pound buck. A sick baby, little James Michael McGuigan, pulled at the heartstrings of the town when the *Times* did a front page story on the tyke. Suppers and other fundraisers were held to help his family meet medical expenses. Skaters at the VFW pond could now change their skates inside of the renovated concession stand. Memorial Hall was broken into and the office of the Welfare department was ransacked.

1955

January - The sophomore class launched a project to design the official Spaulding Memorial School seal. A Teddy Bear which served as the Townsend High School basketball team mysteriously disappeared.

February - Nellie Hoey of the Harbor was killed in a Groton car accident. The PTA held a Cinderella ball. Response to the Polio drive was slow. St. John's dedicated the new Parish Center in the basement of the rectory. Al Anderson addressed the Pepperell Lions on how to attract new industry. School Committee discussed building needs further. Little James Michael McGuigan died at 6½ months of age. The new memorial window was dedicated at the Congregational Church.

March - Only 925 ballots were cast at the polls, slightly more than 52 percent of the voters. Harold T. Dik was returned to the Board of Selectman, Arthur F. Verney, a sticker and write-in candidate for moderator, upset veteran Moderator Earle. S. Bagley, defeating him by 32 votes. Albert Cutting of Main Street lost his arm in an accident at the Clark Lumber Company. Edwin S. West started organizing local amateur radio operators for Civil Defense. On the new School Building Committee for construction of an eight room elementary school were Harold T. Dik, Richard O. Collette, Richard Hikel, Gustave Holst, John Merrill, Ruth Marshall, John T. Moore, Angelo Perini and Edwin West. Slips for Polio immunization were sent home to parents of first and second graders. Francis N. Boutelle, 80, well known town official, passed away.

April - The Rod and Gun Club voted to sell its property on West Groton road, and started looking for another property. 93 young people and four adults were confirmed at St. John's. The School Committee planned a platoon system for grades 1, 2 and 3, which would send the children to school in shifts. Charles and Walter Rossbach earned membership in the Calf Club. A testimonial for Pepperell's Dr.

Cyrus Comminos on the anniversary of his 25th year in medicine was attended by 400. A local Taxpayers Association was started in Townsend.

May - The School Building Committee and the Regionalization Committee both asked for more time. The annual meeting of the Harbor Parish Society was held at the Harbor Church. 121 children were given the Salk vaccine. The town observed Memorial Day on two days with services, a public dinner, and a procession.

June - Evelyn Warren, a resident of the town for over 70 years, died at age 93. The school graduated 30 seniors, but expected 102 first graders the next fall, giving the town some idea of what to expect for school space needs in the coming years. The Racine family was injured in a car accident. The Ashby Band played on the Common. First the grade school and later the high school were closed because of the emergency sewerage condition at Spaulding Memorial School. The town planned to build a new sewerage field that summer. The tax rate went up \$7 to \$62. About 100 voters attended the informational night on the proposed regional high school. The Ashby Special Town Meeting rejected the proposal to enter a regional junior and senior high agreement with Townsend, but Townsend accepted the agreement by a vote of 216 to 74. Townsend would have to seek agreements with another town or towns. A further committee was appointed.

The Post Office advanced to first class.

July - Over 15,000 persons watched the mammoth Tercentenary parade in Groton. Gov. Christian A. Herter, Rep. Edith Nourse Rogers, Lt. Gov. Sumner Whittier, Gen. and Mrs. E.B. Gjelsteen of Fort Devens were among the dignitaries. The Groton Hospital dropped several prominent physicians, including Dr. Cyrus Comminos and Dr. Lawrence Churchville, from their staff. Outraged citizens asked for their reinstatement. In the coming weeks over 3000 people signed petitions for the reinstatement of these doctors, a citizens committee met and an executive committee was formed. The hospital officials remained silent on the dismissals. Antique autos were a feature on the weekly band concert.

August - Pepperell's Warren Hand Tub was damaged at a firemen's muster. The sewerage system plans were still not approved, and whether school could open was uncertain. On the New Regional School Study Committee were Willard A. Greer, Thomas A. Pine, and Robert B. Hoey. The schools were granted temporary permission to use the old sewerage system, and the lunch program was to be operated with paper plates. Grant Plastics suffered a series of break ins by five local juveniles. The firemen saved the Common grass. The Building Committee planned a 16 room elementary school. Grades 1, 2 and 3 would attend split school sessions, it was announced.

September - A joint regional school planning committee with members from Townsend, Pepperell and Dunstable met to investigate formation of a three town system. The sewerage system plans were finally given state approval. The population of local schools was at a new high with 800 students enrolled. The Regional Planning Committee heard plans for a new copyrighted school designed. A canning factory was proposed for the Harbor. Gunderson Construction of Ayer won the bid to build the new sewerage field. The town received a state award for highway safety. A paper drive raised over \$100 for the Civilian Defense Unit. Ralph Hayward was elected new president of the Townsend Rod and Gun Club.

October - Lyman A. Cook resigned as town treasurer. May Misner was appointed as the new town treasurer. The Ayer and Groton hospitals voted to exchange staff and services. A Special Town Meeting was held on whether to build a 16 room school. This school was never built, and the *Times* issue reporting on the vote is missing. Willard A. Greer announced the sale of his oil delivery business to Lorden Oil Co. of East Pepperell. The estimated cost for Townsend for planning and construction of a three town regional school with Pepperell and Dunstable would be \$278,900. Dunstable would pay \$55,600 and Pepperell would pay \$263,940, the state would pay the

Continued on page 31

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The '50's

Continued from page 30

rest of the \$1,710,000.

November - Al Anderson resigned from the School Committee, citing pressures of business affairs. Thomas A. Pine was appointed to take his place. The VFW post burned its mortgage on their recreation park and property. The Senior Class play was "Time out for Ginger." Clark Lumber had a basement fire. A meeting was held concerning the Groton hospital's recent dismissal of certain doctors. H.N. Spaulding, donor of the school named for him, passed away. The Townsend Rod and Gun Club purchased a 150 acre tract of land at Townsend Harbor. Brian Colby and Donna Marquis were elected PTA carnival ball King and Queen. New England Business Service Inc. announced the purchase of a printing company in Brockton.

December - The home of Louise E. Tarbell on Bow Street was almost completely destroyed by fire, and Mrs. Tarbell suffered burns. A fund was set up to help her establish a new home. Townsend had its first Welcome Wagon call, with Evelyn H. Hussey as the Welcome Wagon lady. The school children presented an evening of Christmas carols to the PTA.

1956

January - The year opened with the Regional School Planning Board issuing the report of their study on the proposed school near the Townsend, Pepperell Border. The plan called for Townsend students in grades 7 through 12 to be enrolled in a four town regional junior-senior high school. The regional school district would be comprised of Ashby, Pepperell, Townsend and Dunstable. The plan won the approval of voters in all four towns. A five day northeast rain and wind storm caused considerable damage to highways and homes.

February - Four races were contested in the annual town election. Board of Selectmen Chairman Robert Robichaud was opposed by Arthur Niemi. Plans for the 9th Annual Village Fair and Ball got underway. The Regional School committee interviewed possible architects. Three sub-committees were formed to expedite the process of opening a regional junior-senior high school, planned to be ready for operation in September 1957. A fire almost totally destroyed the home owned by Francis G. Connolly, Jr. The fire in the Townsend Harbor home was thought to have been caused by an exploding oil furnace. Three small children were saved from the flames by Mrs. Connolly, who was hanging out clothes at the time of the explosion. The house was left gutted; damage was estimated at \$7000. \$1200 was stolen from Leland's Super Market located in Townsend Harbor. A controversy between the Groton Community Hospital's Board of Directors and dismissed physicians Dr. Cyrus Conninos and Dr. Lawrence A. Churchville became public during a heated meeting on February 9. Plans were made to vaccinate all school children with the new polio vaccine at the end of February. The town lost one of its oldest industries when the Spaulding Fibre Plant announced it would close its doors in May. The Spaulding Fibre Plant employed 21 men and manufactured leatherboard for shoe heels.

March - Voters were asked to vote on a record breaking appropriation of \$400,000 to carry on town businesses. The actual figure, \$382,713, was approved by the Finance Committee. Harry E. Stetson, one of two men who robbed the Townsend National Bank in 1953, was sentenced to three years in prison. Stetson and an accomplice made away with \$5000. One man was slightly injured, and several cars were damaged extensively in a four car collision at the intersection of Highland and School street. Three local stores were robbed, netting thieves a total of \$60. The Wren Cafe, the New England store and the Townsend Lunch were robbed in one evening. Voters approved a record budget of \$400,409.62 for 1956. The tax rate "jumped" about \$8, meaning that a tax rate of \$62 was increased to \$70 per thousand, a new record for the town. 1025 ballots, representing 55 percent of the voters, were cast in the election for town officers. Robert Robichaud defeated Arnold Niemi by a margin of 26 votes. Niemi requested a recount. Viljo Aho also requested a recount, having been defeated by

Raymond S. Phinney as a member of the Board of Assessors. Phinney won by a 16 vote margin. Both recounts resulted in no change. Ashby-Dunstable-Pepperell-Townsend Regional School Committee made plans for a "school naming" contest. Three late season storms buried Townsend under 30 inches of snow in one week. Two raging blizzards of record breaking proportions came back to back, causing schools to be closed and highway road crews to work around the clock. Two storms depleted the towns snow removal funds. The storms, on March 14 and 17, cost over \$1600 for highway work. The body of an 81 year old Mason Road man was taken from the icy waters of the Squannacook River. John Edward Hutchins, who lived with Mr. and Mrs. Horace G. Murman, had been despondent and had threatened suicide. He was reported missing on March 17, and a wide search began. Tracks were found leading to the river's edge.

April - 400 students, in grades 1-6, were inoculated with the Salk anti-polio vaccine. Dr. Churchville and Dr. Abraham Goldfarb gave the inoculations. 230 preschool children were inoculated at the library. All dogs in Townsend were ordered restrained for 30 days following attacks on deer. The move was deemed necessary to "halt the destruction of deer by roaming dogs." The town received \$5000 in state aid for snow removal. Automation came to the Townsend Center Post Office as a new "automotive cancelling machine" was installed, replacing the need for letters to be hand stamped. 19 year old Bruce Bailey lost his hand in a work related accident at Grant Plastics, Inc.

May - Two sixth grade students, Carol Boyes and Karen Dunbar, won the four-town regional school naming contest when they came up with the name "North Middlesex Regional School." The Rod and Gun Club began planning the development of a 150-acre tract of land. The entrance to the grounds, including a new club house, was planned for Emery Road. Increased expenditures made the news again, as the tax rate came in at \$68 per thousand -- the highest in Townsend history.

June - The School Committee interviewed three candidates for the elementary principal position. Graduation exercises for the 42 graduating members of the Spaulding Memorial School were held. 17 students received awards. The Spaulding Fibre Co. located in Townsend Harbor, closed its doors after more than 60 years in operation. 23 men were left unemployed. Construction began on the addition to the Townsend Bank building. The test borings of the regional school site were conducted.

July - The second shot of the polio vaccine was scheduled; 600 children were inoculated. Two men were injured in an auto accident on the Mason-Townsend border as they tried to outrun Mason police. Lester Goodridge was appointed to the position of Elementary School Principal. Chief Morse flew to Los Angeles, California, to pick up a man wanted for the theft of 267 chickens, valued at \$1850. The chickens were stolen from Stewart Johnson's farm, located on Bayberry Hill Road. Raymond Cote, 16, was involved in two car accidents on the same day. The accidents were the result of faulty brakes.

August - 123 children were inoculated with the polio vaccine. Floor plans for the North Middlesex Regional School were approved by the state school building commission. Wells in the outlying sections of town were depleted during a two week dry spell. 823 students were enrolled for school, requiring that two additional teachers be hired. The school system reviewed plans for a "platoon system" to be instituted. Students would be split according to grade level, grades 1 to 6 attended classes from 8 a.m. to noon, students in grades 7 to 12 attended classes from 1 to 5:18 p.m.

September - Classes opened on September 5 under the two session platoon system. Arnold Niemi was elected to the open post on the Board of Selectmen, defeating Richard Collette. The planning phase for the North Middlesex Regional School was completed. By unanimous vote, the regional school committee au-



Needles and pins...This building on Main Street once housed Elsa Williams, Inc.

thorized the borrowing of \$2,500,000 for the construction of the junior senior high school. Taxpayers began to question the need and cost of the proposed school.

October - The North Middlesex Regional School plan was turned down by voters in Pepperell and Ashby. The Townsend School Committee went forward with plans to build an elementary school. At a special town meetings, voters authorized a committee to begin securing plans for that school.

November - Fire of suspicious origin resulted in \$32,000 in damages to the Arthur Martin furniture warehouse. Blair Arsenault and Daniel Ormsby, representing the elementary school building committee, attended a conference held in Boston. A fire resulted in \$145,000 to Fessenden Company, Inc. The fire was the worst in Townsend history. The barrel company and saw mill were closed for a week.

December - A vote of the Townsend School Committee increased starting salaries for teachers to \$3400 yearly. The building committee chose an architect for the elementary school and recommended that one building be erected. A broken water main resulted in the closing of Townsend schools. \$82,634 was anticipated state aid to be received in 1957. Two men were injured in an automobile accident during a sleet and snow storm.

1957

January - A near record low greeted Townsend resident in January, as the temperature hit 44 below zero. Residents of Townsend Harbor awoke to frozen water pipes. 42 GI's camped in various areas around town. Two well known residents passed away; Oscar Mudgett and Angie Lang both passed away early in the year. Wilbur Scales, a former resident, was killed in an automobile accident on January 15. A man was arrested following a car accident and fined \$50 for operating a vehicle while under

the influence of alcohol. Double sessions continued for Townsend schools, as no end was in sight for the space problems. Initial approval for tenure was given to Chief Morse. The North Middlesex Regional School Committee considered a revised plan for the building, estimated to cost \$2,200,000, as opposed to a previous proposal of \$2,630,000.

February - The building committee for the North Middlesex Regional School met with the state commission SBAC. The SBAC gave their approval for a proposed 24 room elementary school and changes to Spaulding School. A snow storm caused two accidents on Townsend roads; the first occurred on Route 113 and caused a \$150 worth of damage to the vehicle. The second accident was a head on collision, also on Route 113. Both drivers in that accident were injured slightly. Frederick Tenney, a well known grocer, passed away on February 26. Four youths ranging in age from 8 to 10 broke into a Brookline Street home and attempted to set the house on fire. Their attempts at arson were unsuccessful. The home incurred some vandalism; the parents of the four children agreed to make restitution.

March - Voters approved the highest budget in Townsend history with the town meeting acceptance of a \$447,615. The tax rate increased by \$4. Voters gave approval to a revaluation of town property. This gave the town an estimated increase of \$1.5 million in valuation. The annual town election saw Richard Collette defeating Arnold Niemi, who was seeking reelection. Voters said no to a new elementary school at the March 2 town meeting. The plan to build a new elementary school was defeated by 12 votes. The Board of Selectmen called together members of the various school and town committees to research an answer to the school housing problem.

April - Police investigated a break into the Center Service

Station. Three accidents occurred in one evening, one involved a 16 year old girl who fell asleep at the wheel on her way home from a dance. She was treated at Burbank Hospital for lacerations to the face. The Taxpayers Association was initiated; Blair Arsenault was chosen as temporary chairperson. The District Attorney's office investigated reports that six local boys were beaten by state police officers during an interrogation at the Shirley Barracks. Ronald Matson of Fitchburg Road, George Van Eiten of Fitchburg Road, Felician Goguen of Old Battery Road, and John Esposito of Spaulding Road were among those arrested by Chief Morse for breaking and entering in the nighttime, a felony, and larceny. The boys showed marks of a severe beating when they appeared in court. The marks included black eyes, cuts and welts on the back. Parents insisted that an investigation begin.

May - Charges against the boys alleged to have been beaten by state police officers were dropped. The robbery charges against the Townsend youths were dismissed for lack of evidence. Pepperell remained in the Regional School District, Ashby voters gave their approval to withdraw from the district. A 7 year old boy was injured when the bike he was riding was struck by a car on Warren Road. Blair Arsenault was elected president of the Taxpayers Association. Three state troopers were charged with assault and battery on four local boys. Their appearance in Cambridge Superior Court followed a report of the grand jury that investigated the severe beatings of four Townsend teenagers. The officers were relieved of their duties and placed on clerical duty.

June - Plans for a proposed elementary school to be built in Townsend were defeated for the second time in 1957 by Townsend voters. The special town meeting defeated the proposed construction, by 112 votes. All four member towns of the regional school district approved the withdrawal of Pepperell and Ashby. This left only Dunstable and Townsend in the regional school district. A School Study Committee was appointed by Special Town Meeting vote. The first annual 4-H horse show was attended by over 200 people.

July - Wooden nickels, the first

souvenirs of Townsend's 225th anniversary, went on sale for 10 cents each. The 225th Committee began plans for the gala celebration to be held September 7.

August - The town continued to be plagued by vandalism as newly planted trees on the common were broken and fences destroyed. Vandals also destroyed the Scout Bridge at Howard Park. A violent electrical storm hit the area, and caused considerable damage. The electrical storm was the cause of a fire at the Fessenden Co. Inc. mill. The rain caused washouts of some roads; garden tools on display at Powell's Hardware Store were blown into the street by the heavy winds. The Study Committee began collecting information on building a new elementary school and converting Spaulding Memorial School into a high school. Superintendent of Schools R. Douglas Dopp announced his resignation. Chief Morse returned to active duty following an arm injury. He denied rumors that he would leave his post. Town officials feared an arsonist was at work when a fire leveled the Clark Lumber Company, causing an estimated \$50,000 in damages.

September - A 6 year old girl was badly injured during a Labor Day car accident that occurred on Route 119. She was taken to the hospital with head injuries. Three other people involved in the accident were also injured. The town celebrated the 225th anniversary in style with a parade, chicken barbecue, concerts and baseball games. An estimated 12,000 people watched the parade and participated in the celebration. The Tax Association swelled to 200 members.

October - State troopers went on trial for the beatings of four Townsend teenagers. They were found not guilty. Judge Good found that no unreasonable force was used by the three troopers in their handling of the youths. The judge found the youths' injuries "exaggerated." Chief of Police Donald Morse announced his resignation. Sgt. Howard Doran was appointed Acting Chief until a new chief could be named. The post office was broken into; nothing of value was taken. A suspicious fire destroyed the Mason Road home of Maurice Hamel. The fire had initially been put out, the house saturated with

Continued on page 32

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The '50's

Continued from page 31

water, but the following day the remainder of the house burned to the ground.

November - The Taxpayers Association sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen suggesting several proposals for the hiring of a new police chief. President of the Taxpayers Association Blair Arsenault met with selectmen to discuss policy. The association sent up a committee to meet with town departments to assist in preparing budgets.

December - A Finnish bathhouse, located on Vinton Pond and owned by John Tenander, was burned to the ground. Damage was estimated at \$1000. Jerome Q. Bullis was selected as the new Superintendent of Schools for the Ashby-Townsend Union.

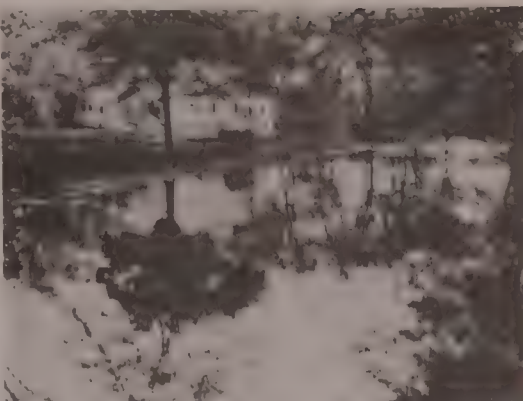
1958
January - Howard H. Doran was appointed as Chief of Police, replacing Donald Morse. Rex Engelmann narrowly escaped a fiery death when his car swung off Route 119. The first big storm of the winter dropped 22 inches of snow on Townsend, burdening the towns' highway department and equipment. A fire, believed to be caused by a faulty oil heater, destroyed a garage and workshop owned by Arnold Sellers, Haynes Road. The North Middlesex Regional School District requested a town meeting to vote on two school articles pertaining to the construction of a new school. The committee unanimously approved the borrowing of \$1,250,000 for the purpose of acquiring land and building the junior-senior regional high school. Three Townsend women saved the life of a deer trapped in an icy brook where it had been driven by dogs.

February - Stanley Kutka and Gerald Rajanemi were held on \$2500 bail in Ayer court following their arraignment on charges of breaking and entering in the nighttime with intent to commit a felony. Local and state police captured the men at gunpoint as they attempted to burglarize the Wren Cafe. An almost unanimous town

meeting vote approved the bond issue of \$1,250,000 to build a regional junior-senior high school. The vote was 342 to 2.

March - 400 townspeople attended the Annual Town Meeting and gave their approval of a record high budget in the amount of \$495,086. This represented an increase of \$50,220 over the amount budgeted in 1957. The record school department budget of \$287,322 was approved without question. Arnold Niemi was elected as selectman. A petition was circulated in Townsend seeking immediate action on the school problems. The petition requested that a study committee be appointed. The Townsend selectmen appointed five people to investigate the modification of the regional school plan to a local school plan. The Woman's Club celebrated its 25th anniversary. A severe nor'easter storm severely damaged telephone lines. The newly appointed Junior-Senior High School Committee began to make plans for a Townsend school, should the town of Dunstable reject regionalization.

April - An order was issued to restrain all dogs. The dog officer stated that all dogs unrestrained would be picked up and destroyed. A former Townsend resident, Helen (Renda) Strine had her debut in the New York City Center production of the opera "Regina." The regional bond issue was defeated by Townsend voters. The vote was unanimous, with 112 voters rejecting the \$1,250,000 bond issue to construct a new school. The Junior-Senior High School Committee met with architects to design a Townsend high school. Dunstable was granted approval to withdraw from the North Middlesex Regional School District, leaving Townsend the lone member of the once four-town proposed region. Bernard W. Morrilly, 37, died following a plane crash off New Fitchburg Road. His son, Bernard Junior, 13, was injured slightly. The crash was witnessed by many Townsend residents, who observed the



A popular recreation spot...The eddy, Squannicook River, was a popular skating area. This photo was taken in 1920, looking down river toward the Main Street bridge.

plane flying low. Local residents rushed to the scene of the crash, and raised the plane off the ground in order to free the trapped pilot. The pilot was held by Albert Laventure until others could free Morrilly's foot from the wreckage. He died shortly thereafter.

May - A direct telephone service line was connected to the Groton police tower. Service at the tower was on a 24 hour basis and Townsend selectmen felt that connecting a phone line from Townsend to the tower would provide better emergency service. American elm trees throughout town were sprayed with 600 pounds of DDT. The trustees of the Elsie Hartnett Memorial Fund announced that a scholarship fund would be set up to benefit a member of the Townsend high school graduating class. School needs once gain came into the news as the Townsend Junior Senior High School committee continued to meet with town officials.

June - A Brockton man was the victim of a hitch-hiker he had picked up. His passenger hit him over the head, robbed him of \$51 and stole his car. He was found on Worcester Road. Action was taken by the Chief of Police to halt the wanton destruction of private and town property. A rash of vandalism erupted in town, as cars were stripped, geranium

plants were destroyed and street signs broken. 37 seniors graduated from Spaulding Memorial School. Attorney James Shaw informed the North Middlesex School District that the Board of Education had disapproved the dissolution of the district.

July - State officials inspected the 27 acre site for Howard Park, a site the local Boy Scouts were starting to develop for a recreation area. One woman suffered hip and head injuries and three other people were shaken up in a July 4 accident on Fitchburg Road. An oil range in the kitchen of the Riverbank Terrace home owned by Herbert Spofford exploded, and set fire to the floor. The Pepperell School Committee requested a meeting with the North Middlesex Regional School District. Dunstable, Ashby and Townsend agreed to attend and members from the Groton School Planning Committee requested to attend as well. Pepperell and Groton demonstrated interest in joining the district. The Board of Selectmen sent numerous letters to state officials requesting that Townsend be allowed to withdraw from the North Middlesex District. Upset over family problems, an 18 year old expectant mother made an unsuccessful attempt to take her life. Mrs. Elaine Gyles told the police that while her husband Daniel was visiting neighbors, she took a

shotgun and placed it on the floor by her feet. Using her toe, she pulled the trigger. The blast missed her, but shot out a window. A 6 year old boy riding a bike was injured when a car struck him on Warren Road. The Commissioner of Education sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen indicating the state's reluctance to dissolve the regional school district.

August - The West Townsend Firemen gave a new fully equipped fire truck to the town. Two Pepperell men and a Nashua NH man were fined \$25 in Ayer District Court on charges they stole 10 gallons of gasoline and four quarts of motor oil from a garage of the Fessenden Co. Inc. Nearly 880 students prepared to enter Townsend schools.

September - Two Main Street businesses were broken into during one night. Thieves broke into the Wren Cafe and made away with two bottles of liquor. Elliott's Service Station was also broken into, but nothing was reported as missing. State requirements threatened to hold up repairs to the Hart Free Library and the West Townsend Reading Room.

October - The school day of one half of Townsend elementary school children was extended by a half hour. The day was extended in order to make more use of the Spaulding Memorial School, which was then used in double sessions. The elementary school had been running on double sessions for two years. A missionary conference was held at the Baptist Church. An attempt to revive interest in the Townsend town band resulted in a meeting being arranged to determine interest. The meeting was successful and rehearsals began. The committee from North Star Lodge of Odd Fellows directed the band program. The change in elementary school hours netted a total of 60 minutes of education for Townsend students. Test dates for TB were announced.

November - John F. Kennedy received 709 Townsend votes in his quest to become a state senator. A night parking ban went into effect. Legal steps continued in order to secure a regional school to house Pepperell and Townsend students. Reverend E.S. Lyons, of the Congregational Church, was

honored for his 10 years of service as chairman of the March of Dimes annual drive. Two accidents occurred on icy roads, resulting in no injuries but serious damage to vehicles. The Fessenden Co. Inc. conducted an experiment to save lumber loss from insects. The company sprayed 54 logs with benzene hexachloride. Dunstable voted to withdraw from the North Middlesex Regional School District. At the same time, Pepperell voted to be readmitted.

December - A 15 minute town meeting okayed the withdrawal of Dunstable and the readmittance of Pepperell to the North Middlesex Regional School District. The Townsend Taxpayers Association elected Earle Bagley as their new president. A reorganizational meeting was held by the Regional School Committee. A railroad employee was injured when an engine hit his work car. Domenico Auction sustained injuries when he was struck by a freight train.

1959
January - The Open Meeting Law went into effect across the state. Louis Josselyn of Townsend Harbor was appointed as the Deputy Fire Chief. The planned regional school was expected to lower the per pupil cost of students enrolled. Plans for the new school, located on the Pepperell Townsend border, continued to move forward. A driverless car crashed into the porch of a Harbor Street home. Damage was estimated at \$300. Six races were contested in the annual town election; a total of 33 people announced their candidacy for town office. Double sessions continued for Townsend students because of lack of school space.

February - Various town committees met and unanimously approved the bond issue for a regional high school. Although the North Middlesex Region was at one time to consist of four towns, two towns had withdrawn their support. By 1959, just Pepperell and Townsend remained interested in North Middlesex. Voters agreed to the new school by a vote of 496 to 4; townspeople overwhelmingly supported the \$1,845,000 bond issue. An early morning car accident on Route 119 injured two people. Ralph

Continued on page 34

NEBS: It all began in Townsend!



Al Anderson



Bartley H. Calder



Richard H. Rhoads

THE EARLY YEARS Al and Frances Anderson started NEBS in their home located behind the Townsend library on Squannicook Terrace. Soon warehouse space was rented in the Odd Fellows hall and office space in what is now Pete's Barber Shop. Later the business moved to a home on the corner of Main Street and Bow Street. To consolidate the expanding operations, Al bought the Collins Cannery in Townsend Harbor. The company was growing so quickly that an outside source of capital was needed that could also supply Al with additional leadership and business acumen to take the company to a higher level. In 1955, Jay Rhoads filled this need when he joined the company, and ten years later his brother Richard came to NEBS. The brain trust was forming that would eventually turn NEBS into the multi-million dollar international company that it is today.

TODAY Over 50% of NEBS 2045 employees worldwide work at the Townsend and Groton facilities. NEBS strives for continual growth by introducing new product lines to keep up with the changing needs of the small business owner. These include the introduction of product lines for the florist, security, and contractor markets. The NEBS Main Street collection of greeting cards for small business and professional use continued to gain market share.

On July 1, 1991 Bart Calder was named Chief Executive Officer, succeeding Chairman Richard Rhoads. These men follow the same philosophy that NEBS was founded on forty years ago...give personal service that meets or exceeds customer expectations. Another NEBS tradition is the belief in supporting the community. NEBS is working very closely with the BEC Coalition at North Middlesex Regional High School, supporting several youth athletic teams, the ambulance and fire departments and various other goodwill endeavors.

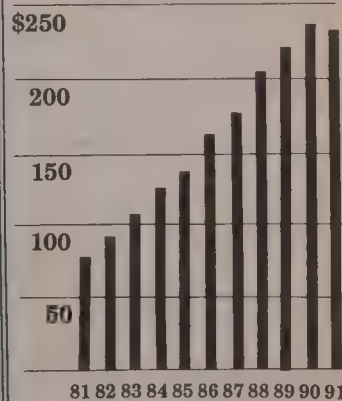
FUTURE NEBS plans to accelerate on-going programs to meet the highest standards of quality, faster delivery service to our customers, and low cost performance. Throughout the entire organization, a continual process of upgrading systems, technology and skills will be a priority of the highest order.

NEBS is also committed to the environmental issues facing the world today. We have been recycling at our various facilities and are beginning to use recycled paper for our catalogs and products.

NEBS' challenge is to foresee the changing needs of small businesses striving to survive and prosper in their competitive market place. We will continue to capitalize on our two most significant strengths...our talented group of over 2000 employees and the goodwill of our over 1,000,000 customers.

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(In Millions of Dollars)



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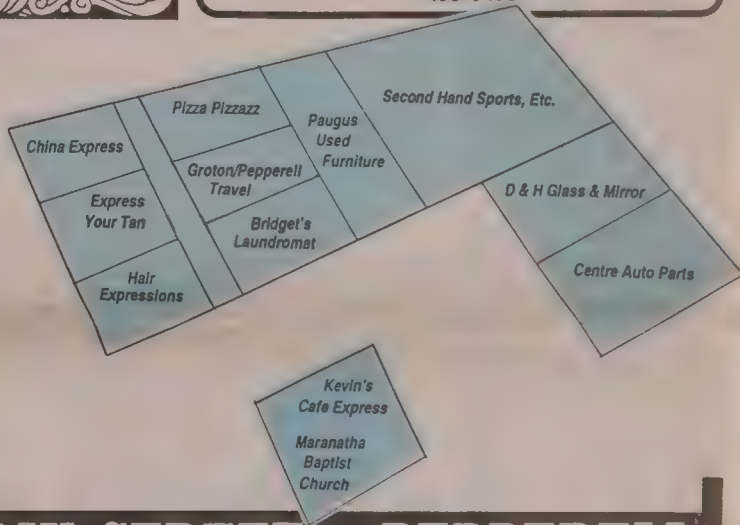
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Into the '60's

Continued from page 32
Clark was appointed as Postmaster of the Townsend post office.

March - Once again, the operating budget for the town was touted as the highest in history as Townsend voters approved a \$596,857 budget at town meeting. Robert Robichaud retained his seat on the Board of Selectmen. Questions arose concerning the regional school, and some were concerned whether the separate school committees in Pepperell and Townsend could vote not to send their students to a regional school. Bond counsel for the North Middlesex School Committee recommended that a petition be presented to the state legislature asking validation of the regional school proceedings.

April - The Lowell bank announced that it would merge with the Townsend National Bank. The House of Representatives gave its approval to the validating act concerning North Middlesex Regional School. A Dudley Road home occupied by William Moore, his wife and four children, was badly gutted by fire, causing \$3000 in damages.

May - The tax rate for 1959 was announced; \$60 per thousand. This reflected the increased budget voted on by taxpayers in March. A total of 4,844 polio shots were given to Townsend youngsters. A new flagpole on the lawn of the town hall was dedicated on Memorial Day.

June, July, August - The Townsend First National Bank and the First National Bank in Pepperell merged with the Union National Bank of Lowell. The merger became official of June 1. The town's oldest resident, Mrs. Walter Farrar, died on June 3. She was 95 years old. Another long time resident of town also passed away. Frank W. Stickney, 85, had lived in Townsend for 70 years. A series of severe storms hit the town July 19. In the latter part of August, land for the new regional high school was acquired and the acquisition completed. Chicks' Construction Company of Clinton was awarded the school construction contract.

September, October - A se-

cond attempt to hold a special town meeting failed when the required quorum was not met. At a special meeting of the North Middlesex Regional School District, George Hill was hired to serve as clerk of the works during construction of the regional school building. Approximately 9 acres of land had been cleared for the school site. A ground breaking ceremony for the new high school took place. A driving rain storm downed several trees and wires.

November - Hundreds of telephones were knocked out of service when workmen accidentally broke underground cables. Selectmen approved additional police protection to elementary school students leaving Spaulding Memorial School. An officer was stationed at the junction of Turnpike and Main Street. The North Middlesex Regional School Committee promised to purchase supplies from local contractors and businesses. A trailer truck caught fire on Route 13 causing damage to the vehicle but no injuries.

December - The Townsend School Committee met to discuss changes needed to meet the local salary scale for teachers. The legal minimum faced by Townsend for 1960 was \$4,000 per teacher, effective Sept. 1, 1960. The school budget had to be reworked to meet that minimum pay requirement. The Regional School Committee approved an operating budget of \$10,920 for 1960. 14 of the 18 acre school site was stripped of trees and construction continued. The first shipment of steel for the regional high school arrived. The final pourings for the foundation were made.

January - Double sessions continued as the NMRHS began construction. Bids continued to be opened for the regional school, as water contracts and the school disposal system came up for grabs. The NMRSD committee met to discuss the reorganization of Pepperell and Townsend school unions. Groton once again requested to attend a regional school meeting. Firemen battled two fires in below zero temperatures; Clark Lumber Mill had its third major fire. Damage to the lumber com-

pany was estimated at \$500. A seven inch snowstorm blanketed the town. Three men announced their candidacy for selectman; four town offices turned into contested races. Joseph Witmer of Main Street was seriously injured in an auto accident. Water rates went up by \$2 per quarter, increasing the quarter rate to \$7.

February - New lights were installed on Main Street on a trial basis. Selectmen ordered a 30 day restraint of all dogs, as three pedestrians were attacked by loose pets. Selectmen attempted to hold the tax rate to \$70 per thousand by recommending that \$12,050 be taken from free cash. An Adams Road family of six lost their home and all of their possessions in a fire that levelled the building. Three boys and their father were credited with saving the life of a teenager. The teen, Joseph Verrio, was trapped in the front seat of a car when the vehicle crashed through an iron railing and plunged upside down into the Squannacook River. The car was submerged, but the Rossback family used a tractor to lift the car, dove into the freezing water and freed Verrio.

March - The state educational department advised that the NMR district have its own superintendent. Arnold Niemi was chosen as the chairperson of the Board of Selectmen. Under 300 voters attended the Annual Town Meeting. The tax rate threatened to soar by \$12 per thousand. The new rate of \$72 per thousand came about because voter approved \$10,000 more in expenditures than had been appropriated. Women operators of the local telephone exchange came under fire, as they were criticized for their handling of fire calls. Firemen leapt to the telephone operators' defense. Howard Doran was reappointed as Chief of Police.

April - The town's oldest and largest manufacturing firm, the Fessenden Co. Inc., surprised townspeople by announcing that it would discontinue operations in June. The company cited declining business as the reason for closing the 96 year old plant. The company decided to use up remaining stock, and then close its doors. Approximately 80



Bridge over the River Squannicook...Wooden bridge over the Squannicook River.

employees were faced with unemployment. The NMRSD Committee began searching for a superintendent. Two firemen were overcome by smoke inhalation while battling an Elm Street blaze. Gates to the dump were locked and hours of operation posted. A chief planning engineer from the state came to Townsend and promoted zoning.

May - The local tax increase was held to \$8, despite an increased budget. The tax rate was set at \$68 per thousand. An increase in estimated revenues offset a higher tax increase. The capacity of the gym for the NMR high school was increased. The Townsend VFW abandoned plans for purchasing the Eaton property in West Townsend. The land was to be purchased for a post home. Two people sustained minor injuries in an accident on Wheeler Road.

June - Many town residents received written warnings from the Board of Health for violations of dump rules. Residents were warned that a second violation would result in a court summons. Highlighting the town's Memorial Day observations was the unveiling of a memorial to all deceased war veterans. Former Lancaster School Superintendent George A. MacArthur was chosen by the NMRSD School Committee to become the new Superintendent of the North Middlesex Regional High School. He was awarded a three year contract, with salaries of \$10,000, \$11,000 and \$12,000. Rev. Gordon C. Capon died suddenly in his home. The Fessenden Co. Inc. closed its doors. A temporary office for the new superintendent of schools was housed in what was formerly the main office of the Fessenden Co.

July - A 9 year old was saved from drowning by a 9 year old playmate. Judy Whittier saw the 9 year old girl under water, dragged her to the surface and called for help. The drowning victim was resuscitated. Three youths narrowly escaped injury when the car they were pushing on Chase Road was struck by another car. Sgt. Marshall captured a 17 year old boy who had been wanted in two states. The teenager was captured at gunpoint in Pepperell after Sgt. Marshall received a report that the man had sped away from a Groton service station without paying for his gasoline. On further investigation, it was learned that the boy had stolen the car and also had a revolver in his possession. Construction on the North Middlesex Regional High School continued to make front page news.

August - The possibility of accepting students from other towns to the North Middlesex Regional School on a tuition basis was discussed. Three teenagers escaped a car accident with only minor injuries. Two small fires kept firemen busy. Raymond Adams of Saunders Road purchased the Champion Laundry and Cleaner Business.

September - Enrollment in the local schools climbed to higher than 900, the highest enrollment figure in Townsend history. Town officials were advised that the ambulance, in service since 1957, would have to be replaced. Five inches of rain fell in a one day storm, causing a hurricane alert to take effect. The highest wage scale in the county was expected to attract "competent regional teaching staff." Richard Bailey, 21, was killed instantly when his car went out of control and crashed into a tree on Turner Road.

October - It was estimated that 47 teachers would be needed for the junior-senior high school. Two people were injured in late night car accidents blamed on slippery roads. Two more people were bitten by wandering dogs. A record breaking number of

absentee ballots were applied for by Townsend voters. 74 people asked to vote in the November election using an absentee ballot. McNabb pharmacy requested a liquor license.

November - Town officials met with state officials to discuss the possibility of the state purchasing 347 acres of land formerly owned by the Fessenden Co. Inc. Mr. Fessenden agreed to the sale. The state planned to preserve the site. A record turnout of 1786 voters cast their ballots during the presidential and state elections. Local voters strongly backed the Nixon-Lodge ticket, with 1104 votes cast for Nixon. Kennedy received 671 votes from Townsend residents. A spectacular fire burned the Fessenden Co. Inc. barrel factory to the ground. Paraffin wax fed the blaze, which firefighters were powerless to stop. Firemen concentrated on saving other portions of the factory. The fire was investigated by state and local authorities.

December - Tenney's Red and White grocery store announced that it would close its doors, ending a 53 year period of supplying Townsend with food products. A new supermarket, owned by Chester Bennett, opened in the Townsend Shopping Center. Three corporations formed in Townsend. F. J. Tenney Co. Inc. was granted a charter to sell merchandise; The Townsend Realty Corporation was granted a charter to buy and sell real estate, and the Groton Kitchen, Inc. received permission to open a restaurant on Route 119. A fire at a barn and florist shop owned by Robert Winter on Main Street caused \$10,000 worth of damages. Theodore Thompson of Kanoche Court was elected to the position of superintendent of buildings and groundskeeper at NMRHS at a salary of \$5,000 per year. Over 2500 people attended the open house at the Bennetts' Red and White grocery. NMRHS students were told they could use their own cars for transportation. D. Leonard Lieberman, Jr. was appointed to the position of Supervising Principal of NMRHS. The regional school calendar was increased by 11 days. Bates Corrugated Box Company purchased the former Truckstell Manufacturing Company plant in West Townsend. Bates expected to hire 50 employees. Fire Chief Walter Leonard resigned after 37 years of service to the town.

1961
January - The NMRSD Committee unanimously agreed to re-certify a budget in the amount of \$228,347, \$22,782 less than the original proposed regional school budget. Various accounts were reduced to lower the budgeted amount. Louis Josselyn was unanimously named as the new Fire Chief. Firemen were called to the R.L. Winters Wholesale Evergreens Company, when a lack of oxygen caused an employee to collapse. When firemen arrived, they found another employee near collapse. Four men announced they would seek a seat on the Board of Selectmen; six other offices were contested. Recently organized basketball teams made up of merchants and businessmen began competing against other area teams. Plans were made for the first viewing of the North Middlesex Regional High School.

February - 35 townspeople attended a zoning bylaw hearing. The hearing was set up to determine zoning bylaws. The Superintendent of NMRHS was able to move from him temporary office at the Fessenden Co. Inc. to the his new office at the high school. Waldo Leahy retired from the Fire Department after 25 years of service. The NMRSD School Committee issued their policy for teaching hiring. 4500 people

toured the North Middlesex Regional High School as the doors to the new regional school were opened to the public for the first time.

March - The four way race for the Board of Selectmen highlighted the annual election. Arnold Niemi was once again reelected. Voters showed their satisfaction with town officials; all incumbents were returned to office. Once again, town officials predicted that the tax rate could increase by \$8 to \$10 per thousand for 1961. The budget of \$667,237 was approved by Townsend voters at the Annual Town Meeting. This figure represented an increase of more than \$91,000. Once again, Townsend residents were told to restrain their dogs for 30 days. That restraint order was extended an additional 30 days and constables had orders to shoot any dogs found unrestrained. The regional high school organized a PTA.

April - Federal Aid in the amount of \$9,940 was requested for regional school. The NMRSD school committee unanimously agreed to accept tuition students at the new high school, at the rate of \$450 per year. Chief Louis Josselyn passed away. He was 61 and had served the Townsend Fire Department for 43 years. Chief Josselyn died suddenly following a brief illness. He left an estate of \$77,000 to his wife. Elsa Williams received an award for her water color painting. A 13 year old boy was saved from drowning when he fell from a wall ledge into the Squannicook River. Three youths pleaded guilty to robbery in the theft of \$116 worth of merchandise from the West Townsend Garage. They were sentenced to three years probation.

May - A former Townsend resident was killed when a truck she was driving on Route 31 went out of control and down an embankment. Mrs. Gertrude Koivula died from injuries she sustained in the crash. Daniel Ormsby was named the new Fire Chief. Maurice Ellis, 26, was found guilty of twice breaking into a Lunenburg Road home and taking \$340 in cash. Spaulding Memorial School officials made plans to sell surplus equipment. Zoning bylaws went into effect, making permits mandatory. The tax rate did indeed jump by \$8 to \$76 per thousand. Austin Goodwin, a father of six, was admitted to the hospital with self inflicted gunshot wounds. A bullet from a .22 caliber pistol entered his shoulder, narrowly missing his heart. Damage estimated at \$20,000 was caused by an early morning fire at Gagne's Supermarket.

June - Salaries and regulations for the custodians of the NMRHS were discussed by the regional school committee. A salary of \$3450 minimum and \$4750 was set for custodians; this was payable at \$2.22 per hour for the minimum pay and \$2.89 for the maximum. A discarded cigarette was thought to be the cause of a fire at the Grant Plastics Inc. factory on School Street. Damage was estimated at \$400. A unified school bus contract saved the town of Townsend \$27,000. Four residents appeared before the selectmen protesting the zoning law. New uniforms for the Townsend Military Band arrived.

July - Chief of Police Howard Doran built a baseball field for children behind his home. The field was constructed out of an old hops field and many of the town's young people helped in the construction. Surplus equipment of the Spaulding Memorial School was sold off. The Planning Board began issuing permits under the new zoning bylaws. Major changes began under the supervision of Superintendent of Schools Jerome Bullis to transform Spaulding Memorial School into an elementary school only. The reclamation project of the Squannicook River began as the headwaters of the Harbor Pond were treated with rotenone.

August - A 200 bed civil defense emergency hospital was granted to Townsend by the federal government, and was scheduled to be delivered on August 12. The School Committee made two rooms available at Spaulding Memorial School for the storage of the equipment. Cardinal Richard Cushing, bishop of the Boston diocese, assisted in laying the cornerstone of St. John's Parish. William Bailey, Jr., was sentenced to six months in prison for passing a bad check at the West Side Package Store. The check was for \$153.23. NMRHS school officials enlisted the services of the Lowell Driver Training School to provide driving instruction to high school students.

Continued on page 35



On the occasion of our 30th anniversary

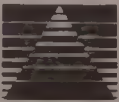


Brian T. Anderson

We are proud to commemorate our 30th Anniversary as part of this community. Our firm was established in 1962 by my father, Terrence J. Anderson, on the principles of concern and professionalism.

Since his death in 1986, it has been my objective to continue in this tradition and to serve the families in this area with integrity and compassion.

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The '60's

Continued from page 34

September - The new one thousand pupil regional junior-senior high school opened its doors for the first time to grades 7 and 8 on September 5, ending eight years of planning and starts, reorganization and re-starts. High school students reported for classes on Wednesday, September 6. The opening of the high school ended years of double sessions for Townsend students. 806 students were enrolled at NMRS. Enrollment for adult evening courses was opened, and 200 Townsend and Pepperell residents participated in night classes. John McNabb, owner of McNabb's Pharmacy, purchased a Fitchburg Pharmacy. Spaulding Memorial School announced that the school would offer music instruction.

October - Three more students enrolled at NMRS, bringing the total student population to 809. The Planning Board began street numbering on some streets. An Old City Road man sustained injuries to the head and face in a one car accident on Ashby Road. A conference at the Baptist Church featured five speakers from the missionary field. Chief of Police Howard Doran announced his resignation. Doran resigned because he had "reached retirement age." The evils of the Soviet System were the topic of discussion at a Legion Installation. Congressman Bradford Morse spoke on the evils of communist government. The NMRS Superintendent sent a letter to the School Committee suggesting the positions of superintendent be consolidated from three positions to one. Superintendent George MacArthur recommended that one superintendent oversee the entire district. He further suggested that all three present superintendents should resign from their positions at a predetermined date and the three school committees form as one to employ one superintendent of schools.

November - Several town departments were in the red, and requested that the Finance Committee carry their departments for the remainder of the year. Construction of Route 495 was predicted to increase Townsend growth, but use of industrial land in the Townsend area would take an additional ten years, town officials believed. A subcommittee charged with investigating combining the three superintendencies into one position was postponed. Harry L. Scott, Inc., closed its doors after 31 years of business in

Townsend. Local and state police investigated a break in at the town hall. Thieves ransacked the building and stole \$124.67. 40 people applied for the Chief of Police position. A furnace on Mason Valley Road exploded, sounding a general alarm for Townsend firemen, but although a hole was blown in the roof and the windows had been blown out, very little fire damage was reported. Sgt. Marshall was named Temporary Chief of Police. All was not well at the new North Middlesex Regional High School, four NMRS teachers resigned, causing a great deal of rumor and speculation among townspeople. One NMRS teacher threatened to institute a lawsuit, but the reasons for the suit were unclear. Eat 'n Joy Donuts moved into the Odd Fellows Building, formerly home to the H. L. Scott store. Eat 'n Joy was owned by Robert Farrar.

December - The scandal over four teachers resigning in a single day erupted further. Boston newspapers carried the story. Female teachers were accused of inviting male students up to their apartment and serving them alcohol. It was revealed that three of the four teachers had been suspended without pay by the school committee for a period of two days. When the scandal broke, the teachers were given the option of resigning or being dismissed. One of the teachers claimed that the resignations were invalid because the School Committee had signed the resignations on a Sunday evening. School officials claimed the resignations were accepted on Monday, and therefore valid. One female teacher reacted strongly to the accusations she had invited male students to her apartment; she claimed the gathering was "innocent and harmless." She began legal proceedings to sue for libel and slander. The Superintendent of NMRS claimed that he considered these teachers to be talented and with great potential; he began looking for placements for them out of the district. Within a few days, he had placed one teacher in a separate district, and had possibilities for the rest. Students reacted very strongly — they supported the teachers and condemned the actions that were taken. The Pepperell and Townsend Finance Committees asked the NMR School Committee to cut its budget by almost \$50,000. The School Committee agreed to do its best. A three day storm kept

What's in store...A.C. Josseyn's General Store and the Post Office at Townsend Harbor.

Modern times...Spaulding Bros. Co., Townsend Harbor. The factory was built in 1893. The company closed in 1956.

Highway Department employees on their toes — and working around the clock. A new owner took over the Clark Lumber Company. Townsend residents had to dig their way out of a record breaking Christmas day snowstorm. It was certainly a white Christmas — 17 to 19 inches of snow fell.

1962
January - Former Police Chief Donald Morse was unanimously appointed to the Board of Selectmen. He took over the seat left vacant by the retirement of Howard Doran. Townsend's new fire alarm system went into operation. \$118.99 was taken in the robbery of the Speedway Service Station. The attendant was slugged over the head, and when he regained consciousness, he found the register empty. William Greenough was reelected Captain of the Center Fire Department. A research foundation bought the former Cooper Farm on Barker Hill Road. The foundation, Retina Foundation, was affiliated with Massachusetts General Hospital.

because they were truant from classes and considered to be "insubordinate." Several of the boys suspended for two days were players on the schools varsity basketball team. Under school rules, because they had been suspended, they were prohibited from future basketball competitions. The School Committee called a special meeting to look into the matter, and after a four hour public hearing attended by over 200 people, the board upheld the Superintendent's decision. The 12 boys had gone bowling instead of attending classes. An ambulance collided with a car during a snowstorm. The accident occurred at the junction of Turnpike Road and Route 119. Both vehicles were severely damaged.

March - Voters approved the town budget of \$740,205 at the Annual Town Meeting. The budget represented an increase of more than \$78,000. The tax rate was expected to increase by \$7 for a total of \$76 per thousand. Robert Robichaud was reelected to the Board of Selectmen. He won by 97 votes. A disabled army veteran died of asphyxiation when his house caught fire. Robert E. Smith died when a kitchen oil burner stove started a blaze in his Highland Street home. Smith was home alone at the time of the fire. Defective wiring caused another blaze in Townsend. The New Fitchburg Road home owned by Irma Morrily sustained \$1800 worth of damages.

April - A petition bearing the signatures of 713 people was presented to the School Committee. The petition objected to the resignation of NMRS Principal Leonard Lieberman. Those in attendance at the School Committee meeting claimed that Lieberman's resignation was forced. School Committee members claimed they had accepted the resignation as a means of cutting costs, as they planned to combine the superintendent's position with the position of principal. Controversy over who was operating the schools — the School Committee or the administration — erupted. An investigation into the operation of NMRS was approved by the School Committee. The National Education Association on Professional Rights and Responsibilities agreed to conduct the investigation. "Notorious" publicity surrounded the regional school. The entire administration announced they would resign.

May - A joint meeting of the Boards of Selectmen from Townsend and Pepperell and the NMRS School Committee was held to discuss the issues plaguing the school system. The selectmen stated that ethics were the cause of the trouble. Fire caused \$4000 in damages to a cottage on Vinton Pond Road. Sparks caused a barn fire on Fitchburg Road. Oral polio vaccines were given to 568 school children. A three day World's Fair was conducted at NMRS. More than 2,000 people attended the educational program. All students participated in creating projects for the fair. The School Committee agreed to pay a \$100 per day fee for a consultant to help the district solve its problems. Two people were injured in an accident on Route 119.

June - The first NMRS senior prom was held. 85 students graduated as the first NMRS senior class. On the recommendation of Superintendent George MacArthur, Andrew O'Donnell, a NMRS teacher, was named as Interim Superintendent. A Townsend youth was arrested for break-

ing into the Spaulding Memorial School. A 15 year old boy lost his fingers in an explosion. The boy, William Bennett III, was banging match heads with a brass object when the explosion occurred. At a Board of Selectmen meeting, the selectmen were presented with a petition that requested the resignation of the entire North Middlesex Regional School committee from Townsend. Four students who failed to pass required subjects but who had acquired sufficient points were given their diplomas, an action that began another controversy for NMRS. Members of press, radio, and television were present at the School Committee meeting, at which townspeople stated that "much harm had been done to the educational policy of the school." The School Committee told townspeople that they had awarded the diplomas on the advice of Supt. MacArthur. MacArthur denied that. He stated that if the standards were lowered for a few students, they would have to be lowered for all.

July - John N. Small was unanimously appointed as Superintendent of North Middlesex Regional School. He assumed his duties at once. The consultant hired to investigate problems in the school cost the taxpayers \$1,500 as of July. Townspeople began to question the value of the consultant.

August - Andrew J. O'Donnell was named Assistant Principal of NMRS. Herbert Marshall was selected as Principal of NMRS. An electric light bulb against a cardboard carton caused a fire at Aubuchon's Hardware on Main Street. The School Committee changed their policy on graduation requirements, so that students who were in the "doubtful" category would know of their status sooner. Progress reports would be issued on these students each quarter. NMRS prepared for its second opening. The Townsend Center Fire Company began adding antique firefighting apparatus to its antique collection.

September - The Fessenden Co. Inc. buildings and factory were demolished. The barrel and tub manufacturing firm had been in operation for 50 years. The 110 foot chimney, a landmark of Townsend, disappeared in a cloud of smoke as dynamite charges exploded the base. 3000 people attended the St. John's Bazaar. Townsend dentists agreed to provide mouth guards for the NMRS football squad. The crash of two seater plane took the life of a 27 year old Townsend contractor. The death of Alan LaViguer was under investigation. Townsend voters set a record in the primary; 464 votes were cast.

October - Teacher specialization began at Spaulding Memorial Elementary School, as 3 teachers were charged with instructing all 84 sixth grade students in the area of their specialty. The SMS library was enlarged and a part time librarian hired. Space heaters were outlawed; the fire department began collecting them. The Worcester headquarters of the Girl Scout organization announced that it had started on the development of a Townsend Girl Scout camp site.

November - Town officials attended a state Civil Defense meeting. A total of 1457 votes were cast in the state election; Philip Philbin, a democrat, polled more votes than his republican opponent. 61 car accidents occurred in Townsend during the first 10 months of 1962, causing \$18,382 in damages. Twenty two

Continued on page 36

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'60's

Continued from page 35
people were injured. A recount was called in the election of the governorship of John Volpe and Endicott Peabody. Volpe received 924 Townsend votes; Peabody received 524. The ballots were placed under lock and key and guarded by Townsend police at a cost of \$30 per day until the recount could be conducted.

December - Six votes for Peabody were found in the recount of the governorship. Townsend became part of a 55 town survey conducted by the State Department of Public Works. Local post offices were opened on Saturdays to serve customers during the Christmas rush. Hitchhiking by students became the object of police action when motorists complained of teenagers thumbing a ride to the regional high school. Adult education classes at NMRS continued to be popular and well attended by townspeople.

1963

January - Frigid weather took its toll on Townsend cars, heating systems and pipes. The NMRS School Committee returned \$36,938 to Townsend. Higher post office rates went into effect. The weather continued to be a topic of conversation and news reports - temperatures dropped to 24 below zero. Local building increased. The Planning Board reported. Two L.O.O.F. Lodges consolidated. The North Star Lodge #144 of Townsend merged with the Beacon Lodge of Pepperell. Five races for town offices were contested.

February - Harbor fireman chased a burning truck as the driver was unaware of the danger. Smoke was pouring from the back of the vehicle, and fireman began the unusual chase to alert the driver. Plans for a ball field to be built at the Spaulding Memorial School were underway. The field, to be named Fessenden Field, was placed on the warrant for voters to determine its fate. \$5,000 was needed to develop the recreational field. A new state law on "conflict of interest," scheduled to take effect on May 1, was in the news as townspeople pondered the implications.

March - Once again, the



There's gonna be a certain party at the station...The Townsend Center Railroad Depot

budget approved by Townsend voters was characterized as "record breaking." A budget of \$722,222 was approved during town meeting. The tax rate was estimated to jump an additional \$4 to \$82. A bus service between Townsend and Fitchburg began. Approved by the Mass Transportation Commission, the service was made possible through a \$5.4 million dollar project. Six round trips to Fitchburg were scheduled each day. Maurice Billings was elected selectman. The towns fire alarm system was damaged when a 2300 volt power line snapped, causing \$2000 in damage. Dogs were ordered restrained for 30 days, due to numerous complaints. The Middlesex County league began planning the Squannacook River Wildlife Area. 56 projects were exhibited at the NMRS Science Fair. John Kelly retired as postmaster after 24 years of service to the town.

April - Five NMRS students were selected to show their science fair projects at the Lowell Tech science fair. Anonymous letters were sent to the Board of Selectmen, requesting that the selectmen look into police witness fees. A gas truck tipped over in West Townsend. An evaluation held of the senior class resulted in several NMRS seniors to be removed from the graduating list. The Knight Funeral Home was purchased by a new corporation formed by Harry Knight and Ter-

rence Anderson. Robert Farrar was denied the right to operate coin-machines in the recreation room over his Main Street store. Six people were hurt in a Mason Road car accident.

May - The status of town offices under the conflict of interest act was established by selectmen. A 16 year old scout was credited with saving the life of a 2½ year old girl. The child was missing for 6 hours and found standing next to a swiftly moving brook by Raymond Laventure. A 150 man search party had hunted for the child through wooded area near the Mason, NH line. Six people resigned from town offices; two of those resignations were cast because of the conflict of interest law. The tax rate was set at \$87.

June - A uniform fund for band uniforms of the NMRS band was set up. A crack-down on all forms of gambling was conducted by Chief Morse. Drag racing was also halted. 75 seniors graduated from NMRS. Lightning hit two buildings during an electrical storm. The former Fessenden Co. Inc. and the Spaulding mill, both located in the Harbor, were damaged by lightning hits. NEBS announced the Townsend based company would expand.

July - An additional first grade was made necessary by the addition of 18 more pupils at the Spaulding Memorial School. Several NMRS teachers received grants to conduct summer study

for students. Lack of reimbursement for land held up the road widening of New Fitchburg Road. Playground equipment began to be installed at the newly constructed Fessenden Field, located at the SMS. The town received a reclassification of its fire rating, which resulted in reduced insurance rates.

August - A prolonged heat wave plagued the town. The Board of Selectmen voiced disapproval of the bidding procedure by the Fessenden Field Development Committee. The Water Commissioners lifted a water ban. Arnold Niemi announced that he would resign from the Board of Selectmen. State and federal regulations were followed at the daily opening of school at NMRS; Bible readings and prayers were replaced by silent meditation.

September - The Townsend Military Band celebrated 125 years of making music. The anniversary celebration and parade was attended by over 6,000 spectators. A 22 month old baby boy was missing from his Elm Lane home for more than 3 hours before being found safe in the woods. Available free cash fell, and it became necessary for the town to borrow \$150,000 to pay its bills. Lack of water hampered the attempt by firemen to stop an Old City Road blaze. The fire destroyed the home owned by Mr. and Mrs. William Fors. Samuel S. Thorpe, Jr., circulated a petition to have a special town election to fill the post left vacant by departing selectman Arnold Niemi.

October - Water rates became the topic of news reports as residents protested what they called high rates. Local fire danger was judged to be extreme as temperatures of 100 and beyond burned the town. The tennis courts at the Fessenden Field were completed. The Special Election petition circulated by Sam Thorpe failed, as only 188 of the 235 signatures could be validated by the board of registrars. 200 signatures were needed. Selectmen and members of the Finance Committee told all department heads to hold the line on town expenses.

November - The water commissioners responded to rate payers questions and presented an interesting study to the town that indicated some single family dwellings used more water than multiple dwellings - and even more than a local laundromat. A police officer was injured when he fell through the floor of a vacant home. A Lunenburg Road boy was fined \$25 for pulling a false fire alarm. The death of President John F. Kennedy shocked Townsend. The town nurse requested - and got - a \$200 a year increase.

December - Donald Ayotte, 17, of Old Battery Road, was injured when the truck he was driving struck a tree. NMRS received accreditation. Townsend received \$10,137 in state road aid.

1964

January - The Fessenden Field Committee issued a statement that \$1865 more in donations would be needed to completed the field. The NM budget went up, while per pupil costs went down. The district requested a budget of \$536,625 for 1964. The School Committee returned \$84,000 to the towns. New England Telephone asked Townsend residents if they favored a toll change between Townsend and Fitchburg. The telephone company was seeking information on whether the local service could be expanded to include Fitchburg.

February - Telephone subscribers indicated they would favor toll free service to Fitchburg. A "cooperative effort" by the North Middlesex Regional School District Committee and the Finance Committees of Pepperell and Townsend resulted in an agreement to reduce the 1964 school budget by \$10,000. Galen Proctor, 92, died at home. Proctor was the last living member of the Grange. Once again, an order was issued restraining all dogs. Four more accidents in Townsend made the news. Minimal injuries were reported. Operation costs for the town dump and the town alarm system rose, as both operations went to bid.

March - A two man race for Selectmen resulted in a win for Raymond Lavalley. A tax increase of between \$2 and \$4 was predicted with the passage of the town budget at Annual Town Meeting. 48 NMRS seniors were college bound. Loren Colt of Turnpike Road was issued a license to store junk automobiles. The remodeling of the VFW continued. At the annual town meeting, voters agreed to enter into a three year contract for the dump. Town counsel informed the

boards a three year contract was not permissible. Loren Colt agreed to serve as caretaker for the dump for three years, for \$1650 annually. It was suggested that Colt be paid on a monthly basis, therefore the contract would not be illegal. 70 students entered exhibits in the NMRS Science Fair.

April - Fire swept through a Brookline Street home owned by Mr. and Mrs. William C. Bennett, causing an estimated \$8000 in damages. Police arrested two juvenile shoplifters following a shoplifting spree that plagued Townsend businesses. A farewell party was held for Rev. and Mrs. Charles Koornruin. After a long period of controversy, the question of a three year contract for maintenance of the town dump was settled, as Loren Colt was awarded the three year contract. A liquor license to serve all alcoholic beverages was denied to George Bouque of Fitchburg. The license was denied on technical grounds. The NMRS Scholarship Foundation was established, and set a goal of \$2000 to be raised. By the mid point of the week long scholarship drive, only \$200 had been raised. Selectmen unanimously turned down a request by Lucern Law for a liquor license. The Hobart House in West Townsend, which was operated as an inn for a number of years, was remodeled by Mrs. Elsa Williams and transformed into the Needlecraft House.

May - Henry Rivers III, a 17 year old Townsend boy, was arrested on murder charges. Rivers pleaded guilty to the shooting of Peter Whittemore, but the court ordered that a not guilty plea be entered. The charges were made against Rivers just hours after the body of Whittemore had been found in a culvert in Amherst, NH. Whittemore had been the subject of a widespread search, as his car had been discovered burning in the Lunenburg dump. Rivers, who was treated for stab wounds to the shoulder and stomach, told police that he and Whittemore had been attacked by a hitchhiker and Whittemore had been forced out of the car. After hours of police questioning, Rivers "broke down" and admitted that he killed Whittemore. NMRS Superintendent John A. Small resigned to take a new position in Littleton. The tax rate came in at \$88; just \$1 higher than the rate in 1963. The scholarship goal was in sight, as just \$350 more was needed to reach the \$2000 goal.

June - 106 students graduated from NMRS. The School Committee began the search for an administrator to take the place of departing Superintendent John A. Small. Methodist Church officials and members rejected drawings and sketches for the renovation of the interiors of the Townsend church. The NMRS School Committee announced that it would consolidate the administration of the high school by having the staff consist of a superintendent and a principal, thus eliminating the assistant principal position. Herbert Marshall resigned as supervising principal of NMRS to take a new position in Seekonk. Discussion began to investigate the inclusion of all grades in Ashby, Pepperell, Townsend and Dunstable under one superintendent. The state Board of Education gave their approval to such a union.

July - Two local businesses changed hands. W. E. Grimes, owner of the Mobil Gas Station, sold his business to Gerard Rousseau. Rousseau had been the manager of the Aubuchon Hardware Store. Construction was slated to begin on the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company in the fall.

August - 397 Townsend residents responded to a labor survey conducted by the Townsend Industrial Development Commission. Projects and events were planned to take place on the newly constructed Fessenden Field. John J. Collins was selected as the new NMRS Superintendent. Collins assumed his duties in early August. Town officials requested a definite date for beginning and completing installation of a dial telephone system. Board members felt a dial phone system "was long overdue." Firemen requested an addition to the Townsend Harbor Fire Station. The appeals board denied the plans, listing four objections. The fire engineers protested that decision. Allan S. Williams was chosen as the new NM Principal.

September - A fire truck and a car collided on Route 113, causing \$450 in damages. No injuries were reported. A newly com-

pleted 18,000 bird poultry house at the Harold Amadon farm in West Townsend made the news. The farm was automated, so that all birds were fed automatically, watered automatically, and fresh air pumped in by electric fans. Poultrymen from surrounding areas came to the Amadon Farm to study the renovations. School registration continued to climb, as a total of 861 students registered at NMRS. 530 students registered at Spaulding Memorial School. 60 Townsend home owners sought exemptions from real estate taxes under a new law that granted exemptions to people meeting certain requirements - one of which was that the person had to be over 70 years of age. No decision came in from the Zoning Board of Appeals on the construction of an addition to the Harbor Fire Station.

October - Townsend Firemen lost their appeal to construct an addition to the Harbor Fire Station. The Zoning Board of Appeals turned down their petition. Thieves broke into the Bennet's Super Saver and robbed a safe of \$2000. Laura J. Connolly, a Townsend author, wrote a history of the early industrial years of Townsend and Pepperell. Attorney Earle S. Bagley passed away, following a short illness. The Board of Fire Engineers agreed to construct their addition within the limits of the town zoning by making the addition 12 x 15 feet, rather than the initial proposed structure of 15 x 15 feet. Ground was broken for the new dial telephone building. The highway department began the monumental task of widening highways. The state fire marshal's office investigated a fire at a coin operated laundry on Main Street. Damage was estimated at more than \$2,000. Selectmen received \$500 from the estate of Stephen D. Coffey. The \$500 was left by Coffey to the library.

November - Fires, many of suspicious origin, plagued firefighters. A fire set on Halloween night at the rear of the Post Office could have resulted in serious injury and damages. The fire had been set beneath a kerosene tank, and in the apartment directly above the tank, a six month old baby was asleep. Only early discovery of the blaze kept the fire from being a tragedy. An arsonist who set at least 14 fires since November 1 was hunted through the woods off Adams Road and Townsend Hill. Two fires had been set in the woods off Adams Road, and when firefighters arrived, a man was seen sneaking out of the trees. A search for the man was triggered, and over 100 people participated in the search for the arsonist. After an intensive four hour hunt, which included police dogs, the search was abandoned. A dry summer and fall left many local wells dry. It was thought that it would take at least a full week of pelting rain to bring the water back up to needed levels. The use of fire hydrants was discontinued due to cold weather. Two Townsend men were critically hurt in a car crash that occurred on Route 119.

December - Growing budget costs of the Nashoba Associated Boards of Health worried Townsend officials. Bates Manufacturing Company requested a permit to expand its business. Louise Tarbell retired from her position as chief operator of the NE Telephone Company. Tarbell had worked for NE Telephone for 43 years. She retired when one of Townsend's most revolutionary telephone changes took place - the installation of dial telephone service. An eight hour search for two lost boy scouts ended happily when the boys were located on a storm-swept Mt. Monadnock in Jaffrey. The NMRS Booster Club was formed. The addition to the Bates Company received the okay from town officials and the company broke ground for the Townsend addition.

1965

January - The town fire alarm was disrupted and power blacked out when an automobile struck and toppled a utility pole on Route 119. Town officials predicted that there "was not the slightest hope of holding the tax rate increase to a \$1." Chairman of the Finance Committee told departments to forgo any unnecessary projects as the Finance Committee began reviewing department budget requests. A bill of complaint was filed in Middlesex Superior Court against the Zoning Board of Appeals. The complaint alleged that the ZBA exceeded its authority in granting the Bates Corrugated Box Co. a permit to construct an addition. The grading of students

Continued on page 37

36 Years of Award Winning Service

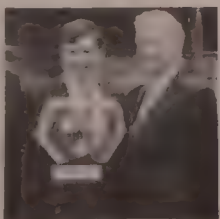


The original Townsend Ford building in 1956.



The new Townsend Ford building was built in 1988 under the direction of Tom Cleary.

Thomas Cleary, President and Joseph Cleary, Treasurer proudly display their latest award the 1991 Chairman's Award from Ford Motor Company, the most prestigious award presented by Ford Motor Company.



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USED CAR CENTER
Rt. 13, Townsend-Lunenburg Line

597-8955 Townsend	597-2827 Used Car Lot
448-6022 Groton	342-1937 Fitchburg

Into the '70's

Continued from page 38

the Town cannot finance." Troop 10 celebrated 44 years of scouting. Severe snowstorms hit the area. A testimonial dinner was held for Dr. Lawrence A. Churchill in tribute to a quarter century of medical service to the community. Two men from Nashua were apprehended when attempting to break into the old Spaulding Leather Board Mill. Officer James F. Clish was appointed acting sergeant. Selectmen attended a tax-crisis meeting.

March - Highway Department was commended for excellent snow removal. Donald J. Dyer was elected to the Board of Selectmen. The Youth Center was closed due to vandalism. Taxes went up to \$6.25/thousand. Rep. Shattuck introduced a bill for reconstruction of Rt. 13. The selectmen talked of a possible flooding situation. New England Business announced plans for an addition in Townsend.

April - A new children's room opened at the public library. Former Town Treasurer Mary J. Misner was honored at a testimonial. \$50,000 was added to the cost of a NMRS addition because the state came up with new requirements for the handicapped. Joseph B. Daigle was appointed to the Police Dept.

May - Rev. W. Earle Magoon Jr., was honored for 7 years of service to the First Baptist Church. Miller-Terrell Post #199 American Legion celebrated its 50th anniversary. The selectmen banned burning at the town dump. Vandalism on the Common, five accidents and numerous investigations kept the Police busy.

June - Bow Street became one-way. A new post office was slated for the town. Cumberland Farms held its grand opening. The sSelectmen appointed a study committee for Public Works. Prominent in American Legion affairs, John Kelly was honored at a testimonial. Lorden Oil on Highland Street suffered \$3,025 in fire damages. Officer Gerald Ingerson and Chief Donald Morse assisted in delivering a baby on Brookline Street. It was 131st year of Thursday evening concerts by Townsend Military Band. Former correspondent for the *Times* Odelia Brown passed away. Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Valcourt celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

July - Townsend tax rate went down to \$7/thousand. PFC Richard Barnaby, Main St., was awarded the U.S. Army's commendation medal for heroism against hostile force in Vietnam. Bayberry Hill housing project plans advanced. Selectmen signed a permit for an apartment building on Rt. 13. Mr. and Mrs. Franklin Shepherd celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. Officer Bruce Daigle was attacked while making an arrest. West Townsend Firefighters captured first place in N.H. Fourth of July parade. The Townsend Tigers had a new bat-boy, 2 year old Sean Price, Jr. The State Division of Fisheries and Game purchased VFW Park. Owner of Townsend Ford, Joseph Cleary, Jr., received the Ford Dealership Distinguished Achievement Award. "Stephanie" raced home to victory at Hinsdale Raceway, owner Michael Little.

August - A smoke bomb tossed into Wren Cafe forced patrons to vacate the premises. Else Williams, designer of embroidery and owner of the Needlecraft Shop, was a guest on the Dave Garroway TV Show. Bats invaded Town Hall and four motherless raccoons were cared for by the Shepherd family. Former Townsend teacher, Theodore W. Johnson, received the Bronze Star in Vietnam. Townsend considered purchasing the Harbor Church. Police received numerous complaints about unruly and troublesome youth. Townsend Police began displaying the American Flag as part of the regular uniform.

September - A violent electrical storm stuck. Forest fires consumed three acres of woodland off Rt. 13 and the firemen challenged the police to a softball game. The library received a new coat of paint. Selectmen denied the use of a wooden bridge on West Meadow Road and the Honeywell Corporation offered training to Townsend grads. 700 of the 101 Engineer Battalion of the 26th Div. of the Mass. National Guard camped at the CC Camp off Dudley Road.

October - Firemen edged police 28-26 in softball. An embroidery exhibit at the Needlecraft

House drew hundreds of people. Robert Redford and Paul Newman starring in the "Sundance Kid" drew hundreds to the theatres. VFW Post #6538 and Ladies Auxiliary held a "Burn the Mortgage" Party. "Auntie Dot Gallant" was the #1 cheerleader for the Fire Department. Main St. Lunch came under new management with Paul and Myrtle Lestage. 70 teenagers invaded the Common to experience a "Happening," a self-organized sing-in. Mr. and Mrs. Sanford Johnson of Bayberry Hill celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Aud's Antique & Gift Shop opened on Brookline St. Corner House Restaurant, formerly housing the Rene Press, was opened by owners Gene DesLauriers and wife Peg. The NMRS expansion came with a \$795,000 increase for the town. Couples Club started its first phase in erecting two skating rinks at the rear of Spaulding School. "Way-out," a new type coffee house/youth center, attracted teenagers.

November - Voters approve expansion of the NMRS. An Irish Setter helped to find a West Townsend resident rescued by the town's rescue squad. 63 speeding signs were to be erected. Five cars were totalled in one week. Troop 10 Boy Scouts hosted a "Friendship Jamboree."

December - Couples Club skating rink neared completion. Townsend Gardens received the finishing touches. The selectmen started talking about a middle school. Dick Newton opened a music store in West Townsend. Selectmen appoint Anthony J. McDonald to the Police Force.

1970

January - Cub Scouts collected toys for Crotched Mountain. The selectmen ordered flags flown at half mast to mark the death of Mary J. Misner, 83 year old former town treasurer. Elwin Swicker announced his candidacy for assessor. Roderick H. Martin announced his for a selectmen's post. Coffee at the Super Duper was advertised for 69 cents a pound with green stamps. Taxable property, increased by over \$500,000. The Board of Engineers requested a wage increase for firefighters from \$2 to \$2.15. Supt. of Schools Jerome Bullis announced retirement date.

February - There was a break-in at Townsend Ford. Revaluation was recommended for the town. Ann Lammi announced her candidacy for School Committee. The Lions Club proposed Snowmobile Races. A former Townsend girl, Linda Souza, was named "Wac of the Month" from Fort Monroe, Va. The safe at Super Duper was ransacked with \$800 reported missing. No opposition was shown for Corner House Restaurant's liquor license. Sirloin steak was selling at Super Duper for 98 cents a pound. Interest rates were running at 5 1/2 percent and a seven room house was selling for \$16,900.

March - The Navy sent a mobile unit to Townsend for recruiting purposes. The proposed budget was up 12.4 percent, \$154,000 higher than the previous year. 21 candidates were named for upcoming town election and the School Committee recommended the purchase of land off Turnpike Road. Powell Hardware announced its 20th year in Townsend. The Water Department showed a surplus of \$12,526.32. 200 voters approved revaluation of property and a \$1,229,311 budget. Auguste H. Fortin Jr. was elected Moderator with 415 of the 1841 registered voters voting. The tax rate went up to \$.8. Police Chief Donald Morse was reappointed. The Planning Board published the Master Plan. The selectmen approve Noyes' land for proposed new post office.

April - Changes were slated for the town dump. The Fire Department honored George Sullivan, a 15 year veteran of the department. Opening Day for fishing season drew large numbers to the Squannacook. The selectmen explored the idea of a common assessor for Townsend and Ashby. Several residents assisted in finding missing children for Ayer. The American Legion sponsored a town clean-up day. "M*A*S*H" and Walt Disney's "Castaways" were showing at the theatres.

May - Tax rate was set at \$57/thousand. "Three Sisters" fabric store opened opposite Cliff's Donuts. Arnie Pajari, age 68 of Mason Road, became a U.S. citizen. The Women's Club donated a bike rack to the library.



Lyman McPhee.

Two 1970 Fords were stolen from Townsend Ford. There was some contemplation of changing the town hall set-up. "Alice's Restaurant" and "Midnight Cowboy" were theatre fare. A new pickup truck was listed for \$2,395.

June - 200 signed a petition to request an STM on VFW Pond by residents determined not to lose the park and swimming area. The Military Band noted its 132nd year in business. The Planning Board began to study a recommendation for additional police quarters. A barn on North End Road was saved by quick responding firefighters. The school budget accounted for 56 percent of the tax rate, according to Treasurer Hope Creighton. William T. Kao of Fitchburg Road received his broker's license from Lee Institute. Memorial Hall was found to be inadequate and recommendations were made to raze and construct. Townsend Automotive Service moved to a new location along Rt. 119. Studies showed expansion wasn't necessary at the library. New dentist comes to Townsend, Dr. K. Gus Uotinen. Townsend School Committee requested study for future classroom space.

July - Voters approved leasing VFW Pond from Fish and Game. The ZBA threatened to quit over hassle with selectmen. A major addition was needed for the Water Dept. Townsend High School alumni celebrated a 50th reunion. VFW Pond was cleaned and ready for swimming. A fire caused \$2000 damage to a Warren Road home. The bench at the common was broken, and windows were smashed at local business establishment. Selectmen demanded resignations from the Advisory Board for alleged incompetence. The Salvation Army donated a resuscitator to the Fire Department. Planners report showed over one-quarter of land in public or semi-public hands. Teenager Gary Russell built a racing car. The town was told it could be assessed as much as \$94,000 for county court house. A liquor license was granted to the Corner House Restaurant.

August - Townsend youth challenge police to football game. A 1970 Ford sold for \$3,295. "Airport" and "Myra Breckinridge" were playing at the theatre. A Neighborhood Analysis indicated that blight areas were nonexistent in the town. The Corner Restaurant reopened with Rudy and Vera Polzer in charge. Two more 29-unit apartments were slated for construction. Sgt. James F. Clish resigned from the police department.

September - Residents protested the closing of the dump on Sunday and circulated a petition. Gerald Ingerson was named Acting Sergeant on the police force. An editorial focused on dedicated librarian Gertrude Hale who had passed away. Governor Sargent praised the town for a highway safety project. A helicopter landed in West Townsend piloted by Richard Mickson who dropped in to visit his mom. The Health Board refused to open the dump on Sunday. The high cost of veteran's benefits necessitated a STM. The Planning Board recommended Rt. 13, Townsend Center by-pass. 143 children entered grade one at Spaulding School. A Bedford firm proposed a commercial dump and it was noted that the state owned 25 percent of Townsend land. The final payment was made on the SMS addition. Police averted a shoot-out with an AWOL soldier. Townsend Democrats endorsed Edward Kennedy for reelection.

October - Over 125 voters soundly reject proposal for commercial dump, Robert Tumber circulated petition and Planning

Board recommended landfill dump site between Mason and Turnpike Road. Else Williams held an open house to honor builder of new addition to the Williams Manufacturing Co. Bob Porter was the new manager at Super Duper. Town Dump was to open on Sundays. Children at the Congregational Church collected enough money to send a heifer overseas for the needy. Raynold Jackson assumed new duties as Troop 10 Scoutmaster. Rep. Shattuck was the featured speaker at the American Legion Installation. A portrait of Gertrude E. Hale was donated to the children's room at the library. Complaints were lodged against the Cemetery Commissioners. A break at McNabb's Pharmacy resulted in several items being stolen. A Town Meeting had to adjourn due to lack of a quorum. A farewell reception was held for Rev. and Mrs. Richard Manwell who served the Townsend Congregation church.

November - Fire leveled the Townsend Harbor home of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Holohan. A second attempt for a town meeting was still short. Police Chief Donald Morse announced new regulations for snowmobiles. Possibility of a regional dump was under discussion. Super Duper had walnuts for 48 cents and ham slices for 99 cents. Another 29-unit apartment complex was near completion off Turnpike Road. Julian Bolden of Main St. shot an 8-point, 165 lb. Buck. Mr. and Mrs. Leon Marshall Sr. celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

December - Couples Club had trouble getting help with their skating rink. Over 150 attend Christmas tree lighting on the common. The Women's Club announced a Christmas Decoration Contest. Raymond J. Lavalley was appointed veteran's agent. Mrs. and Mrs. Allison E. Ganong, Sr. of Main Street celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

1971

January - Selectmen were to meet with school committee over \$141,000 hike in budget which represented \$10 increase on tax rate. Skaters enjoyed Couples Club rink. "Love Story" played at the theatre. NMRS released its budget showing a \$347,062 increase over the previous year. Historical Society received valuable gifts from Mrs. Carl B. Willard. Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Joaquin hosted visitors from Japan. The Finance Board saw a \$16 tax hike in 1971. A 17 percent increase in population figures noted and the Water Dept. added \$20,000 to its surplus account. Rodney Webster resigned from the NMRS School Committee. 1970 brought an additional \$1,639,000 in taxable property. The Women's Club urged Congress to obtain fair treatment for POWs. U.S. Air Force Major John Small received the Bronze Star for action in Vietnam.

February - Selectmen were seeking federal funds for sanitary landfill dump, Roy E. Johnson announced his candidacy for selectman. Thomas F. Obea sought a second term on the Board of Selectmen. \$50,000 was requested to establish a new dump. Rates from Fitchburg Gas & Electric were challenged. Barbara Jordan announced her candidacy for Spaulding Memorial School Committee. After 13 years in business, the Settle Shop was proving to be a huge success. A "100 Club" was started in town. The Finance Board recommended a \$35,000 cut from the \$1.5 million requested from town departments. Rights to VFW Park were in danger. The Townsend Office of Union National Bank was awarded a trophy for

"Greatest Improvement in Christmas Club Sales for 1971."

March - The principal at Spaulding School requested a full time playground director for Fessenden Field. Police Officer Alvin E. Eaton Jr., resigned from the force. A warrant article called for the Tarbell lot in exchange for VFW Park. 430 attend town meeting and approved a hike in police salaries. Roy Johnson defeated Obea for selectman's post. Quorum for town meeting was reduced from 200 to 100 and voters cut the budget by \$55,000. Richard P. Baker was appointed the 5th police officer on the force. Blair Arsenault was reappointed to the Finance Board. Dail-A-Sermon came to town. The Planning Board was asked to approve 186 housing permits. The State Tax Commissioner distributed \$72,906.21 to the town.

April - Randi Krelschar won the Safe Driving Essay sponsored by Thomas Kao Realty. Construction on the new post office was delayed indefinitely. A way to dispose of refuse was being studied by four committees. Mr. and Mrs. Bullis were honored at a public reception, and Mr. and Mrs. P.K. Brown celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. The town saw the formation of a Babysitting Co-op. The Planning Board approved preliminary plans for 135 new homes. Two more 24-unit apartment complexes were pending. The *Times Free Press* announced their new location at 1 Railroad Street in Pepperell. Mr. Everett Bomeman of Highland Street celebrated his 90th birthday with five generations in attendance. Selectmen questioned the effectiveness of the police department. You could get chicken for 29 cents a pound and pork chops for 59 cents a pound at the Super Duper.

May - New zoning by-laws would require 40,000 square foot lots. Many town organizations participated in a town-wide cleanup day. Harold W. Gilchrist, an 18 year veteran of the police force, passed away. School physician recommended fluoridation for town water. Post 10 Explorers demonstrated aerial ladder at Wallace Civic Center and "Valley of the Dolls" was playing at the movies. Mr. and Mrs. Clifford A. Ford celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. Voters approved the 40,000 square foot lots.

June - A Waltham man drowned at Rod and Gun Club pond on Warren Road. The Women's Club initiated glass recycling. 1,284 house lots were being proposed while town officials express concern about potential rapid development in the town. Congressman Drinan visited. The town held a "Keep America Beautiful" cleanup day. The police officers joined the union. SFC Ronald Wornham was awarded an Army Commendation Medal for service in Vietnam. The Historical Society project had children recording 300 gravestones. The Memorial Hall roof came under repair. "Ryan's Daughter" and the "Aristocats" were enjoyed at the theatres. Prices at Super Duper included peanut butter for 39 cents a 12 oz. jar, turkey at 39 cents a pound and cocoa at 69 cents.

July - Cherry Sheets showed a net gain to the town of \$7,423. Revaluation increased property assessment by nine million. Rev. Robert Paul Shire became the new minister at the Congregational Church. Paul Adams from

Saunders Road won the "Gravity Grand Prix," better known as the Soap Box Derby. Phillip Ekola was another Townsend entry. NEBS announced anticipated sales of \$6,700,000. The Police Association had a new ambulance. Donald Shattuck, age 74, who was a member of the Townsend Military Band for 50 years, passed away in Ayer. Umberto "Alfie" Fraticelli became the new manager of Noyes's Fish Fry and Dairy Bar on lower Main St. A reception was held for Rev. Waterhouse, who served as interim minister at the Congregational Church. The first recycling project with 3 tons of glass collected was a success. Earla Somerville became the new Townsend correspondent for the *Townsend Times* and the Board of Health reopened VFW Park for swimming after there was a ban because of high bacteria count.

August - Opposition was shown for a new sub-division in town. A strenuous objection was voiced against a petition for landfilling on Spaulding St. Open burning was to result in legal action by state. James Jordan asked Chairman Hanks from the Planning Board for his resignation on grounds of conflict of interest. Police announced they would have a base station. Bates Corrugated Box announced construction of a \$1,000,000 plant.

September - Clayton Hanks resigned from the Planning Board. Allen Gould won honors at the Grange Fair. A new physician, Theodore C. Salzman, opened his office on Main Street. Somerville Insurance Agency opened on Main Street. The Methodist Church announced the celebration of its 200th anniversary. Selectmen received a petition with 174 signatures asking strict adherence to zoning by-laws. Elm Street Garage underwent a complete face-lift and the state turned down a request for a variance on burning at the dump.

October - Over 200 residents questioned the selectmen on filling of wetlands. The Board of Health told they granted illegal variance to Kadar Corp. Charles Hale celebrated his 75th birthday. Silver Thimble Show attracted hundreds at Homer House on Route 119. Filling of wetlands caused heated discussion. Over 1500 homes were slated for construction. Tenney's Haberdashery closed after 21 years in business. Voters approved \$79,412 at a STM. Three members of the Health Board were summoned by request of Kadar Corp. A Revere man suffered 2nd degree burns in a Townsend Harbor fire. The former Governor, Foster Furcolo, met with selectmen on the issue of drug abuse. Chairman of Selectmen Dyer felt Police Dept. was getting too large.

November - A Water Street resident charged police with phony towing charges. Mr. and Mrs. Omer L. Marquis celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. Townsend Ford announced they would double the size of their service facilities. Five Police Officers were fired with no comment from Selectmen. Selectmen were summoned to labor board hearing.

December - Construction on Elm Street was planned. Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Johnson celebrated their 25th anniversary. Work began on the new Bates Corrugated Box plant. Town department wage hikes were being held at 5.5 percent. Town Counsel, Police Chief and selectmen walk-

Continued on page 40

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Townsend in the "Me Generation": The '70's

Continued from page 39

ed out of a state labor hearing. It was the 10th anniversary of the Home Decorating Contest. James and Thelma Miller celebrated their 25th anniversary.

1972
January - Builder Robert Hicks received two building permits as the year began and also charged the Planning Board with unfairness and harassment. Bates was awarded \$750,000 to buy land and construct a new building. Small Business Administration contributed \$337,500 and \$75,000 was a grant from Fitchburg Area Economic Development Corp. A new Beauty Shop opened on Elm Street called the "Beauty Shed Boutique." Educational costs soared to \$607,000 over the previous year. The town was denied financial help from the EDA under Public Works Impact Program. Selectmen and the FinCom called for reconsideration of the 1972 school budget. John Pelletier dropped his candidacy for selectmen. Joe Bergeron donated a stretcher to the Explorer Post. The police commended New England Tel & Tel for its part in tracking down the source of a bomb threat at NMRHS. Townsend opinion poll put students as important issue facing the town at election time.

February - A Watershed Association was formed to protect the Squannacook River. Selectmen heard complaints about the lack of road sanding while inland water and wetlands bylaws were proposed. Bruce Goyette resumed his duties as a reporter for the *Times Free Press*. A northeastern Tel Townsend scenic but hazardous. The new Snowmobile Club was formed. The Super Duper was selling milk for 99 cents a gallon and Bold detergent for 69 cents.

March - Over 200 attended Candidate's Night. Hicks again charged harassment by town boards. Girl Scouts celebrated their 60th anniversary. A four car accident occurred at Route 119 and Wheeler Road. Townsend Finance Committee recommended \$62,000 saving to taxpayer with cuts in school and town budgets. "Cabaret" and "Song of the South" were showing at the theaters. The Fire Department had uniforms for the first time. The Nashua River Watershed Association commended the town on its wetlands bylaws. Voters cut the school budget by 3 percent. There was a 12 percent increase in registered voters according to Town Clerk Franklin Morrison. Voters adopted a building code and requested a salt ban. The "Godfather," "Twiggy," and "The Boyfriend" played at the theaters. Voters rejected water mains despite court action threat.

April - Donald Morse was re-appointed to the police force. No one could burn at the dump, and regional planning on dumping was a "no go." Arnold Misner was appointed assessor. A Tyler Road resident complained about gravel trucks operations. The town got a dog ordinance. Two woodland fires burned over 50 acres around Meetinghouse Road. Marianne Phinney was a National Merit finalist. You could buy 20 pounds of potatoes at Super Duper for 79 cents. Spaulding School hit a new high with 654 pupils.

May - Former *Times* building on route 13 was demolished. The selectmen denied having guar-

anteed water supply. The town celebrated the 100th anniversary of Arbor Day. Dot King won first prize in a Firemen's raffle. Bates Corrugated Box received approval on a loan to expand.

June - The Fire Department donned their new uniforms in the Memorial Day Parade. Incinerator disposal came under discussion by Health Board. Representative George Shattuck spoke to the Republicans. The Military Band launched its 134th season. A petition circulated for an insect spray program. The FinCom voted to approve, but not defend, a 3 percent cut in the school budget. Roderick H. Martin, selectmen chairman, was censured for unauthorized action. NEBS reported sales up 33 percent. The town saw industrial expansion. Voters returned \$81,000 to the NMRSD and the Cherry Sheet showed a net increase of \$139,576 over the previous year. NEBS announced they would add 38,000 square feet.

July - The new tax rate was set at \$46.50/thousand. Tom Shay, Sterilite's first employee, retired. "Fiddler on the Roof," and "The Graduate" were showing at the cinemas. Townsend Ford increased their facility by 50 percent. Elsa Williams designed a White House heirloom on request from Julie Nixon Eisenhower. Kadar Corp was investigated for cutting into water lines. State Police inspected fires of suspicious origin on Lunenburg and Worcester Road. 1970 Fords were selling for \$2,695 at Townsend Ford.

August - Leonard Williams won \$2500 in the Mass. Lottery. Oranges were selling for 49 cents a dozen and cantaloupes for 39 cents at Super Duper. Ken Carlson opened a music shop opposite the high school. Coon Day Water Races were held at the Rod and Gun Club. The Class of 1927 announced its reunion plans. Thomas Kao opened a new real estate office at the corner of Oak and Main Street.

September - Board of Health members questioned selectmen about outside involvement, stating "time could be better spent solving Townsend's problems." Ray Adams and Son purchased 14,000 square feet of shopping center. The Lions painted the town common fence. The dump continued to be a big problem. The Labor Board ruled in favor of four officers that had been fired.

October - A Main Street fire caused \$4,000 in damages. Company 1 of the Fire Department initiated new life saving program. Selectmen claimed "no word on police from state labor commission." Harold Amadon, former Assessor and FinCom member, passed away.

November - The town was sued for \$1.2 million by police union for damages incurred by four fired officers. Eva S. Dean celebrated her 84th birthday. Hank Buckholdt was appointed custodian at the dump. Thomas Kao confronted the Planning Board on their complaint of operating a real estate office illegally. Raymond LaValley, a former selectman, passed away. An open house was held for Father Foley. Developer Reagan was removed from a Planning Board meeting by police. The Golden Age Club was initiated. A new bridge spanned the mighty Squannacook. Opposition was



1940's pumper...At right, the 1942 pumper Ladder No. 1.



Death be not proud...The Old Burying Ground on Highland Street.

voiced against underground telephone cables.

December - Selectmen appeal orders from the State Labor Relations Commission regarding four officers. George Shattuck became the new owner of the Powell Hardware. The FinCom demanded the school budget be cut with a 1.7 percent ceiling sought. Officer Anthony McDonald released a letter to the press stating that selectmen "do everything to prolong outcome of case."

1973
January - A Boston and Maine railroad train derailed. Recycling is reported to be working. Kadar Corp. sued the Planning Board for the rejection of a subdivision. George Hannah celebrated his 85th birthday. Terry McNabb's Pharmacy was broken into so he stood in front of his business, keeping guard with a gun. Fire caused minor damage to antique store on Main Street. A winter storm dropped 12 inches on the town.

February - Racial integration was called for on the town meeting warrant. An Ad Hoc Committee was appointed for senior citizens. The Custom Picture Framing Company was established at the former Bates facility. A gala 100th anniversary was being planned by the Fire Department. Kenneth Miller became the new owner of the Wren Cafe on Main Street. A 16 lane bowling alley and Kao variance was approved. Dick Keefe was honored by the Police Association for 50 years of service. Resurfacing of Route 13 was to be completed soon, and a pound of pork chops could be purchased for \$1.29 at Super Duper.

March - Superior Court ordered selectmen to rehire fired police officers. School budgets passed for 2.2 million. James McMasters defeated Fowler for the selectman seat but Fowler won the position on the Planning Board.

David Pfister, six years on the school committee, left his post. The Industrial Commission maintained that 1972 was a good year in the town. Selectmen recommend a town manager type of leadership. Voters approve \$2,843,140 at final session of town meeting.

April - Controversy raged over Keefe Bridge. Sterilite employees rejected a move for a union. The high Squannacook awaited opening day anglers. Homes in Timberlee Park were selling for \$23,950. Town Counsel ruled that the town had to pay the Montachusett Planning Commission. The Health Board was threatened with legal action by Developer Reagan again.

May - The town sought to change town meeting from March to May for budget purposes. A 250 year old Elm on Main Street was designated an historic Elm, one of only two in state. Town personnel assisted in rescuing five Mason, N.H. children who were lost for close to 7 hours in heavily

wooded area along Townsend/Mason N.H. line. Malcomb McCullough received the Postal People Award. The Historical Society purchased the Reed Homestead in the Harbor. Thousand of dollars in equipment was stolen from the Highway Garage.

June - 25 year veteran Police Chief Donald R. Morse submitted a letter of resignation. The last Community Kindergarten Class graduated. The tax rate was up \$4.50 to \$51/thousand. Larry's Sub Shop opened on Main Street. Larry Muse at Townsend Ford claimed the best buy was a 1972 Ford LTD Convertible for \$3,695. Residents complained about the disturbance at the Common by young people. The police charged 10 in brawl near the Common. The 3rd oldest military band in the country celebrated its 135th year. NEBS showed a 30 percent increase in sales.

July - Four bikes were reported stolen. Another lawsuit emerged, this time for \$100,000. Portable classroom were coming to Spaulding. Fireworks prompted complaints. State Aid showed a \$68,000 increase. Elsa Williams Company was purchased by Standard International Corp. Jeffrey Roy was a familiar riding a lawn mower. Wheeler Road bridge was to be replaced. Albert Stone was named President of Sterilite Corp.

August - Youth cleaned the old swimming hole at the Squannacook. Selectmen disallowed gravel removal from town by Kadar Corp. Brent Brown made an impossible dream come true when he became a blacksmith.

September - Brian Esposito, age 12, collector of old license plates, received one from Townsend, Montana. The Women's Club began its 40th season. A new and bigger police sign was erected. Youth refused to leave the Common area. One of the oldest points of service, the Red Brick Store, went out of business. Spaulding School teacher Judith Vieweg, age 31, was murdered just ¼ of a mile from her home. Erving M. Marshall was appointed Chief of Police. Two men drowned when their vehicle plunged into the Squannacook. Anna May was recognized for 20 years of service to the post office. A Townsend young person was found hanging in the back yard.

October - Citizens questioned whether to drink or not to drink on Common. Richard Robichaud, member of the Fire Dept., passed away.

November - The dump was rapidly filling up. The new Squannacook River Bridge was dedicated. Voters banned drinking in public places. Strong winds downed wires and damaged homes. An apartment owners threatened the water department with court action due to increased water rates. Gloria Bastarache was a finalist in the Diet Workshop Holiday Recipe Contest. The town experienced a one hour power shortage. Selectmen moved to eject developer Reagan

due to heated discussion over building permits.

December - Selectmen complained about the paint job on Memorial Hall. A hearing was held concerning the four police officers who were discharged. The murder of the young teacher was still under investigation. Timberlee Park residents wanted their road plowed. The police had a hectic time due to an ice storm and numerous accidents on treacherous roads. Homes were selling for \$29,900 and apartments renting for \$185 a month. There was a fatality Christmas Eve.

1974
January - The dump was ordered closed. Auntie Dot Gallant passed away. A resident requested that Mary Milbury from the Health Board be ousted. Selectman Ray Johnson resigned. Hundreds of dollars in property was stolen from Townsend Garden Apartments. The Planning Board turned around and sued Developer Robert Reagan. The residents blamed Reagan for lack of trash pick-up, not the Health Board. Kadar Corp. filed a suit in Superior Court against the Planning Board. A committee was appointed to locate a site for a new dump.

February - Bus service became more of a reality for the town. Baby lambs arrived at the Leng residence on Main Street. Townsend Ford offered a '73 Galaxie 500 for \$3,000. The banks were offering free checking. L. James Santerri was the second resignation from the Board of Selectmen. Snow removal was approved for Timberlee Park. Cars were lining up at Pierce's Cigo Station due to gas rationing. "We give S&H Green Stamps" advertised Super Duper. There was a \$10,000 fire at the Gray residence on Townsend Hill. A seven room Colonial could be purchased for \$36,000. The operator of a van lost control of the vehicle and it plowed into the living room of Elwin Swicker's home on Street. Mrs. Paul Cronin, wife of 5th District Congressman, spoke at the Women's Club. Fitchburg and Leominster Street Railway Company notified the town of its intent to establish a bus service in the town.

March - A judge urged boards to resolve differences with developer Reagan. Nine motor vehicles were ransacked and completely stripped. Fire gutted the Turnpike Garage. A lawsuit was threatened by Elbthal Realty Trust. Four firemen were injured at a house fire on Main Street. Developers continued law suits and threats. Town Hall got new vinyl siding.

April - An 18 year old got stuck in the head by a beer bottle thrown from a moving vehicle. Tunafish was selling for 44 cents a can, cooked ham for 78 cents a pound. 160 new resident voters were reported. The oldest resident, Everett Borneman, celebrated his 93rd birthday. The town faced a million dollar suit by Elbthal. Close to 300 attended the Fishing Derby. The Historic Commission wanted the Common established as an historical district. James E. Martin won the "Voice of Democracy" contest. Robert E. Willard from the post office resigned. Reagan brought a second suit against officials of the town. Middlesex Superior Court ordered selectmen to hearing on the Elbthal suit. The assessors told the town 1½ million had to be raised in taxation and the FinCom urged residents to express their opinion on spending while they approved a \$1,966,202 budget. Richard Jarvi won the selectman seat. Louise Goyette won a free shopping spree at P&C. William E. May was appointed a full time police officer.

May - The tax rate dropped \$6, and was set at \$22.50. The Methodist Church announced its 125th anniversary. Underground tombs were found at the Hillside Cemetery. Sander Vanocur was a guest speaker at the Women's Club. High Fowler was elected chairman of the Planning Board and Mary Milbury chaired the Health Board. Two acres of woodland burned off Turnpike Road. Robert Hotaling was appointed Water Superintendent.

June - Voters rejected a dump site off Mason Road. Elbthal initiated contempt proceedings against selectmen. James McMasters announced his candidacy for State Rep. The Judge orders selectmen back to court, with charges that involve possible

imprisonment and fines. The selectmen were served subpoenas, \$400,000 for each member issued on request of Developer Reagan. The Military Band launched 136th season. Constance Shepard's "Always Together Horses & All" was published. Richard Smith was elected Chairman of the Mass. College Republicans. A ranch house was selling for \$29,900.

The court requested that selectmen sign Elbthal's permit. The town held its first bicycle rodeo. The Board of Health approved Reagan's permits. William May was appointed Sergeant of the police force. Dot Paulson left her post after seven years of service as the organist at the Congregational Church. A bicentennial marker, a 20 ton granite boulder, was placed at the upper common. NEBS reported business up 25 percent.

July - James Hamel was appointed to the police department. The town designated as an official bicentennial community at the band concert. Playschool announced its would take 3 year olds. The town got a new fire engine, a Mack Custom 750. Four people narrowly escaped death from a hit and run driver. Home Builders Association calls the town's water moratorium unfair. Fireman Russell Webb rescued a kitten from a 20 foot well.

August - Democratic candidate Paul Tsongas spoke to residents on the Common, the Rev. James Brosius resigned from the First Baptist Church. Selectmen decided to keep meetings opened to the press. Once again charges are made, this time against the Health Board for discrimination against a developer. Vandalism occurred at Fessenden Field and again complaints were filed against youths for malicious destruction to property. The Planning Board approved new telephone facility on Railroad Street. A fire bug was loose in the town. The Water Commission was accused of "trickery" and "deceit." Ethel Amiro, the school nurse, resigned after 40 years of service. The police were commended for a drug raid.

September - Nicholas Casson was recognized as the first master electrician and inventor to whom a license was issued in the whole country. Oysters were \$1.18 a pound, and lobsters were \$1.98 a pound at Super Duper. "Gone With the Wind," and "Sound of Music," were at the theaters.

October - Lorna Burnside was honored in Who's Who Among American High School Students. A five year old lost in the woods was found by a bicyclist. Paul Tsongas was outlining an 8 point plan to bolster the economy. A motor vehicle smashed into the Townsend Harbor House. Bill and Beulah Greenough celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. 300 viewed the newly discovered underground tombs. The firemen's wives organized an auxiliary. Ethel Amiro and Franklin Morrison were honored at a retirement party.

November - A new post office was announced for the town across from lower Main Street shopping mall. McKenna, another developer, questioned water rights and more trouble ensued from developers over the water moratorium. Velma Smith was the town clerk and Marjorie Kumpu was appointed tax collector. A 10 point buck was bagged by Bruce Lashua. The Keg and Kettle opened at the corner of Depot and Route 113. The Golden Agers celebrated their 2nd anniversary. Fire gutted an 11 room house on the Townsend/Mason, N.H. line. Police Officer Fred Martin did not receive reappointment. A two-tenement house on Main was demolished to make room for the post office. The interest rate was running 5½ percent. Firemen planned a statue for Spaulding Common, a full-scale statue of a fireman cast in bronze. Kelci Fortunato was the winner in the *Times Free Press* "Tom Turkey" contest. The Porter's Discount Store opened on Route 199. James Hamel resigned from the police force. Former Selectman Thomas Obea passed away at age 48. Susan Weiner received a \$25 bond from the firemen for her theme "Town firefighters, a century of service." Timberlee Park residents brought building complaints to the selectmen. The dump custodian was cited by the Health Board for negligence. NEBS donated a telephone device to the Ambulance. A new town shopping center was progressing

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'60's

Continued from page 36

at North Middlesex Regional High School underwent a change; students were marked by numerical grades rather than the traditional A, B, C's. The NMRS School Committee approved a budget of \$557,563, representing a \$20,000 increase over 1964. Mandatory salary increases, demanded under state legislation, was the primary cause of the increased budget. A 16 year old boy was placed on probation and judged a delinquent child in connection with the break in of a laundromat on Main Street. Fire Chief Daniel Ormsby resigned after 40 years in Townsend's fire service. The Planning Board voted to meet with a Boston engineering firm to discuss a master plan for Townsend. Frank C. Smith of 35 Adams Road was granted a special permit to open a sand pit off Route 113.

February - Flags were flown at half mast in memory of former Selectman Milton Paige. An article placed on the town warrant involved the clean up of the "eyesore of abandoned motor vehicles throughout town." The article sought to place a \$10 per week fine on property owners who kept junk cars on their land. A flu epidemic kept 20 percent of NMRS students home from school. The Finance Committee recommended a 1965 budget of \$806,687, an increase of slightly under \$30,000. A master plan was presented to town officials. The Hilltop Hatchery came into the news, as visitors from foreign countries came to the Bayberry Hill farm. The Hilltop Hatchery and Poultry Breeding Farm shipped out 22,000 chicks each week. The business, begun by Leo Makela, and built up by son-in-law Lee Larson, became a model of breeding farms.

March - Richard Collette won the Board the Selectmen race. Rev. Richard Manwell became the new pastor of the Townsend Congregational Church. The town voted to stay in the Nashoba Health District and amended town by-laws to set future town meeting and election dates to the second, instead of the first, Monday in March. The changes came about during the Annual Town Meeting. The Lowell Gas Company appeared before the selectmen to discuss their plans for bringing gas to Townsend. The NE Telephone and Telegraph Company began laying underground cable for the new dial telephone service. The NMRS School Committee voted to meet with Tyngsboro officials to discuss the possibility of accepting Tyngsboro students at NM. NE Telephone began studying the possibility of toll free service between Townsend and Pepperell. The DPU granted a request for a 30 day delay in action on the permit application of Lowell Gas Company. Selectmen requested the delay, to make further study on bringing natural gas into town.

April - An exchange concert between the bands and choruses of a Vermont school and NMRS set a precedent for out of state exchanges. 500 parents visited the Spaulding Memorial School Science Show. Demand for toll free service between Pepperell and Townsend continued to grow. NE Telephone approved the toll free service between the two towns. The selectmen voted unanimously to favor the petition of Fitchburg Gas & Electric Light Co. to provide natural gas service to Townsend. The selectmen chose Fitchburg Gas & Electric over Lowell Gas because of the proximity of Fitchburg to Townsend. The petition of Bates Corrugated Box Company to expand its factory was agreed to be reheard by the ZBA. Acceptance of Tyngsboro students to NM was considered. William Greenough of Brookline Street was named chief of the Townsend Fire Department.

May - The assessors announced that the 1965 tax rate would remain at \$88 per thousand, due to increased business activity. A large turnout at the Bates Corrugated Box hearing indicated that townspeople supported the expansion. The budget was Veteran's Service Needs was depleted as of mid-May and officials predicted that the budget would have to be doubled to meet the needs of Townsend residents. 50 feet of ledge slowed the work of the Water Department as they tried to lay a water main extension on Adams Road. Drilling and blasting of the rock was necessary. Stuart W. Frazier was awarded the Meritorious Civilian



Tower of tomes...The library, 276 Main Street.

Service Award by the Commander of the United States Army at Fort Devens. This award is the second highest award given to civilians.

June - A severe electrical storm caused heavy fire damage at Franklin Shepherd's farm on Lunenburg Road. Three other homes suffered serious fires from lightning bolts as well. A Special Town Meeting was called as the 1965 appropriation for Veteran's Benefits was depleted and no other money was available. A quorum was not met, and the STM adjourned before action could be taken. The ZBA unanimously authorized a special permit to Bates Corrugated Box Co. to build an addition on land owned prior to the adoption of the Zoning By-Law, but denied Bates' petition for a variance to build on property acquired after zoning became effective. Government officials announced that Townsend had been given the approval to participate in the Head-Start project. The project was designed to give disadvantaged children pre-school lessons prior to entering regular classes. Townsend tested its modern dial telephone service, and went to seven digits rather than pre-dial numbers as residents for the first time were able to dial direct. Two men were seriously injured in a car accident on Mason Road. The West Side Package Store was robbed at gunpoint. Two men made away with \$380 in cash.

July - A second robbery at the West Side Package Store netted thieves \$200 in cash. The expansion of Bates Corrugated Box was held up once again as a public hearing was announced to rezone the Bates land from residential to industrial. Voters overwhelmingly supported the zoning change at the Special Town Meeting, by a vote of 362 to 11, the land owned by Bates was rezoned industrial. The Head Start program got underway with 15 to 20 pupils participating. A Nigerian student came to the Samuel Briguglio farm to study practical poultry farming. Computers made the news as local supermarkets used an IBM 1440 Data Processing System to order inventory from a Vermont warehouse. Townsend held its first annual Fireman's Muster. Private water wells were low; commissioners urged water conservation.

August - Town officials studied the possibility of creating a district for the distribution of veterans benefits and information. Selectmen requested volunteers to fill vacant positions on town boards. The alarm center logged 929 calls for July. The largest water main project installed by the Water Department in more than a decade was completed. Over 4,900 feet of pipe and extensions were involved in the Adams Road extension. Due to drought, the fire department banned outdoor fires. Letters in support of Fitchburg Gas & Electric Co getting the natural gas franchise from the DPU were written, at the same time, Lowell Gas Company circulated a petition requesting that they be given the gas franchise. Work to expand the meeting room at the Harbor Fire Station was completed. Chet Bennett resigned as manager of the Super Save. Thomas Morrissey became the new manager.

September - School opened on September 8, and once again, enrollment figures rose over the previous year. 957 students were enrolled at NM. Meetings between town and school officials began to determine the interest in joining a proposed vocational technical high school. 13 towns and 2 cities indicated they would

be interested in sending students to the proposed school, to be built in the Northern Worcester county. Four people were injured in a three car crash on Route 119. A permit was granted for a \$10,000 addition to Williams Manufacturing. The Needlecraft House held a four day exhibition of needle craft work, drawing 3500 visitors. John McNabb refaced his Main Street pharmacy. A new NMRS parents group was established. They named themselves the CCAC - Community Commission for Academic Cooperation. Sportsmen and members of the Explorer Post began to clean up the Squannacook River bed.

October - The Planning Board unanimously announced that while they were in favor of vocational and technical training, they were opposed to the proposed regional vocational technical high school. Selectmen announced a Special Town Meeting to vote on the proposed school. Superintendent Jerome Bullis supported the proposed vocational school. Two men were held on bail for charges of an assault and unarmed robbery that occurred in Townsend. Little damage was done to a school bus and no injuries were reported when a 16 year old Pepperell boy attempted to pass a school bus full of students. The driver of the car lost control of his vehicle and slammed into the side of the bus, causing damage to the bus, but no injuries. Frances Boucher, active in community groups, passed away. A memorial fund was set up in her honor.

November - Voters turned down participation in a regional technical high school by a margin of 22 votes at a Special Town Meeting. Townsend was the only community who said no to the proposed school. Town residents felt that too few students would participate for the amount of financing required. The licensing board suspended the license of the Townsend Package Store for one week, as the result of complaints that liquor had been sold to minors. Acts of vandalism at NMRS were reported and townspeople attended School Committee meetings to discuss student behavior and vandalism. Townspeople suggested a dress code for students. Volunteers who manned the town ambulance sought aid in getting a new vehicle. The town began purchasing salt in bulk. A third officer, Gerard Rousseau, was appointed to the Townsend Police Department. Townsend residents were invited to attend a NEBS open

house. The Greenwood Tennis Club Inc. sought a special permit for a \$500,000 sports center that would have been built on Main Street in a residential zone. The center was planned to have indoor and outdoor tennis courts, sauna baths, an Olympic sized swimming pool and fenced in wading pool. An abutter, Porter Harley, protested the granting of the permit. Amherst Electronics moved to Townsend.

December - Town employees presented a petition for an article to be placed on the town warrant which sought to require that the town pay half of health insurance and Blue Cross Blue Shield premiums. A Main Street man, Homer Eggleston, was injured in a car accident when he swerved to miss a deer. A storm kept both the police department and the highway department busy. The Planning Board studied the Master Plan for the town's future growth.

1966
January - John Collins announced his resignation as Superintendent of NMRS, to take effect June 30. Police Chief Donald Morse discussed with selectmen the possibility of having a fourth permanent officer added to the department. Selectmen agreed

that a fourth man would lighten the load. A new Police Association ambulance was delivered. Businessmen and individual donations made the purchase possible as a fundraising drive went over the top in a matter of days. Joseph Cleary of Townsend Ford provided the vehicle at cost. A Special Conditional Permit was issued for the proposed tennis club to be built in the harbor. The Planning Board placed seven restrictions on the project. Well known Townsend resident Bernard Brown passed away.

February - The Center Fire Company held a retirement party for two men leaving the department. Omer Marquis retired after 25 years' of service, Robert Barrett retired after 15 years of service. Mrs. Leslie Stow passed away. She had purchased the Old Mansion in the Harbor in 1922 and started its restoration. In 1953 she turned it over to the Society for the Prevention of New England Antiquities. Several town offices were left without candidates seeking to fill them. Town Counsel ruled that the Board of Selectmen had the legal right to include a question on a regional vocational school on the town warrant. Enrollment at Spaulding Memorial School reached 600.

March - The subject of a Master Plan for Townsend made the news as Townsend officials explored the benefits of having such a plan. A Master Plan would make Townsend eligible for federal funds for water, parks, sewerage rebuilding of town buildings and beautification. Medicare for people over 65 was passed. The town nurse made an effort to have all those eligible for these benefits to sign up by the March 31 deadline. At town meeting, the vocational school was once again voted down. The meeting went so long that it became necessary to adjourn and reconvene the following week. Maurice Billings was reelected selectman. The Master Plan was voted in. Land in the harbor was re-zoned to allow Sam Giacomazzi build a bowling alley. An article putting a \$20 fine on junk cars was passed. Voters also approved the purchase of a few fire fighting equipment. There was a major crack down of speeders, when 21 people were "booked." Police were concerned about the high in-

cidence of accidents on Townsend roads, and decided to take a strong stand on speeders. NEBS announced that it would build a 16,000 foot addition.

April - The Police Association members built a two car garage adjacent to the town hall at little cost to the town. Prominent businessman G. Fred Tenney died after a short illness. Tenney had operated the grocery store at the Center for 41 years. Richard Bouvier was authorized to establish a pool room at 243 Main Street. Townsend reached their United Fund goal. Sgt. Arthur Tomsick, who was married to former Townsend resident Narda Porter, was awarded the Bronze Star for "exceptional valorous action" in Vietnam.

May - A permit was granted for the building of six homes on Shirley Road. The Red Cross Bloodmobile came to town; 73 residents responded. A Conservation Committee was appointed by selectmen. Lewis Brown was named as chairman. Edwin W. Rowell was appointed Superintendent-Principal of NMRS. He was scheduled to assume his duties from the departing superintendent on July 1. The gas franchise was finally awarded. Fitchburg Gas & Electric was awarded the Townsend franchise.

June - A spectacular fire destroyed the town barn, at a loss of \$20,000. The fire had been touched off by a lightning bolt. Several fire fighters risked their lives in their attempt to get town equipment out of the barn.

July - Arthur Eaton passed away at the age of 39. The town was "shocked and grieved" by his sudden death. A Friends of the Library group was formed. Saturday morning story hours were begun for pre-schoolers. The Head Start program began in July with 36 students participating. Robert S. Hargraves was appointed as the Assistant Superintendent of NMRS.

August - Gordon Decato resigned as principal of Spaulding Elementary School to take another position. The Townsend Muster Team hosted the second annual Fireman's Muster. The muster was held at Timonen's Field in West Townsend. Dorothy Gallani was appointed to head the fire

Continued on page 38

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The '60's

Continued from page 37

alarm center. The alarm center could be operated from the Center fire station in case of emergency. At a Special Town Meeting, voters approved the formation of a five man committee to study the building of a new town garage. Voters also agreed to donate a 1953 Ford forest fire truck to the Townsend Muster Tram. Rev. Thomas Brosnon was appointed the new parish priest at St. John's. Norman May was elected as principal of Spaulding Memorial School, effective October 1.

September - Willard Greer, a prominent businessman, died early in the month. He had operated the Greer Rival store for 30 years. 18 members of the Explorer Post, along with 4 local men, made a 75 mile canoe trip across the rivers and lakes of Maine. The music director at NMRS, Sidney Gates, resigned his position to take another post. A permit was granted by the ZBA to Robert and Susan Marriott to construct a professional building on Lower Main Street. Toll free telephone service between Pepperell and Townsend went into effect. An insurance check of \$33,185 came in, for the loss of the town garage.

October - The second annual needlework exhibit was held at the Needlecraft House in West Townsend. NMRS won its first football game - over Westford, starting a winning streak. The Townsend Water Department announced the purchase of \$10,000 worth of new equipment out of department funds. This was the first purchase of new equipment since the station had been built in 1934. The town rented Fessenden property on Main Street to house equipment. Col. Charles Penrose

was appointed as the music director at NMRS. A police school was held over several weeks at NMRS. The course, sponsored by the Chief of Police Donald Morse and Pepperell Police Chief John Pelletier, featured an average of 60 officers from 13 cities and towns.

November - The Boosters Club of NMRS presented the Springfield College gym team exhibition in the school gym. SP4 George H. Chase of Pepperell and Townsend was killed in Vietnam on his 23rd birthday. Flags were flown at half mast in his honor. A large congregation of townspeople attended his funeral. The junk car problem once again made the news, as it proved to be uneconomical to remove the cars. It became clear that taking legal action against the owners would be almost impossible. Spaulding Memorial School hosted a cheerleading tournament; 9 teams entered. The PTA of Spaulding Memorial School hosted an auction, raising money to be used for risers for the music department. J. Harry Rich, a former member of the Finance Committee, died. Robert W. Valcourt, 24, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Valcourt, died following an assault at the Wren Cafe. He received fatal eye and brain injuries inflicted by a cue stick. Two Rhode Island men were taken into custody for his murder.

December - A Lunenburg man announced that he would remove junk cars at no charge. Because of his offer, it was possible to enforce the junk law passed at Annual Town Meeting. A Special Town Meeting brought out 296 voters, who approved the pur-



Louise and Bruce Goyette.

chase of 48 acres of land on Dudley Road. The land was purchased from the Fessenden Company for \$10,000. The land was to be used to build a town garage, however, that article failed to pass. Voters felt the plans were too expensive. At the same Special Town Meeting, voters approved the purchase of 30 acres of additional land for the Water Department. Voter also gave the okay to purchases of equipment lost in the town garage fire. A controversy arose over where to put the new fire truck. Selectmen and the Fire Engineers finally agreed that the new truck should be placed at the Center Station. A youth group worked to raise funds to establish a Townsend Youth Center. Two dances were held to help raise funds for this purpose. NMRS was broken in to; thieves stole \$1,500 worth of equipment.

1967
January - The Elementary School Building Committee recommended that the town take "immediate action" in prevent overcrowding. Officials from Townsend, as well as four other area towns, attended a meeting to discuss Ashby's school problems. Regionalization began to be discussed. The NM budget increased by \$83,125 to a total of \$695, 891. The Townsend Historical Society presented a history of the Baptist Church and Saint John's Parish. Twenty scouts attended a weekend of winter sports at Camp Wanocksett in New Hampshire.

February - A second group of scouts attended the winter sports event at Camp Wanocksett in New Hampshire. Elsa Williams was a guest artist at the Winterfest Exhibit of Needlework. The Conservation Commission indicated that they would seek Town Meeting approval to develop Howard Park for recreational purposes. Superintendent of NMRS Rowell told the School Committee during his first annual report that the expansion of NMRS was necessary. Rowell said that the school had to be expanded to prevent overcrowding in the junior high grades. A blizzard covered Townsend with 25 inches of snow. The Board of Selectmen announced their support for the Town Garage. The benefits of area planning came under discussion as the Planning Board questioned a move into the proposed Monachusett Planning District. Town officials were not sure what the benefits of such a formation would be.

March - Annual Town Meeting was conducted over two nights, due the large number of articles on the warrant. Moderator Arthur Verney presided over the annual town meeting for the 12th year. Newly elected moderator Michael Sullivan presided over the second night of meeting. Difficulty in obtaining a quorum for town meetings was addressed, but voters declined to limit the 200 person quorum. 325 voters approved the town budget of \$939,246. The town voted in favor of building a new Town Garage. Ashby accepted the recommendation of the School Building Study Committee and voted unanimously to join the NMRS district. Raymond Lavalley was reelected to the Board of Selectmen. The NMRS gym was named to bear the name of Arthur Bartlett, a loyal supporter of the sports program. The Highway Department was given control over the operation of the town dump.

April - It was announced that Alcon Plastics and United Plastics Company of Fitchburg had purchased the Fessenden property on Main Street. The companies proposed to build 150,000 square feet of manufacturing warehouse space, that would employ 175 people. "Steri-lite" and "Royal-

ware" plastic household goods would be manufactured at the Townsend site. The Townsend Friends of the Library became active and sponsored numerous programs. NMRS students presented the musical "Finian's Rainbow."

Installation of the Fitchburg gas line into Townsend continued. A \$12,000 fire at the Roberts home partially destroyed a barn, ell and two rooms of the South Row Road house.

May - The Friends of the Library sponsored an exhibit at the library of work done by NMRS students. SMS students held an Art Fair. The Planning Board scheduled public meetings for numerous zoning requests. The Board of Assessors requested that the Board of Selectmen set up a committee to look into the evaluation of the town.

June - A three year old girl was killed by a car in a tragic accident. The child, Deborah Sullivan, had climbed out of her parents vehicle and was struck by a car travelling west on Main Street. Chester Bennett, a long time resident of Townsend, passed away. Ground breaking ceremonies for the \$500,000 plastics manufacturing plant were held on June 9. Selectmen signed a \$50,616 contract for building of a new town garage on Dudley Road. The contract was signed almost a year to the day the old garage had been destroyed by fire. Raymond Lavalley resigned from the Board of Selectmen due to a conflict of interest. The Planning Board voted against re-zoning a portion of the Harbor. The tax rate rose by \$4.

July - The NMRS Teachers Association proposed a change in the school hours. The regional school committee supported the change, and approved the earlier starting and dismissal time. Mr. and Mrs. Roger Wetherbee were seriously injured in a car accident in West Germany. They were flown to Burbank Hospital. The Alcon Plastics and United Plastics Company continued to make news as construction proceeded as planned.

August - The National Cablevision Inc. company contacted selectmen and requested consideration of a franchise. Voters at a Special Town Meeting approved a change in the Townsend bylaws. Fitchburg Gas and Electric Company began to modernize the distribution system. Selectmen gave their approval to fund money for the painting of Route 13 traffic lines. Robert Hargraves, the Assistant Superintendent and Principal of NMRS, announced that new school hours would begin in September. "Mysteries" were reported on Elm Street.

September - Once again, enrollment in Townsend schools was reported as record high. NMRS went over capacity by the new enrollments - 21 students put NMRS over the top in terms of building accommodation. New toll free telephone service between Lunenburg and Townsend went in to effect. Voters approved 7 zoning bylaw changes. A leak in an oil tank at NMRS was discovered. A four day needlework exhibit was held at the Reading Room. Because of increased interest in offering adult education courses at NMRS, district officials began to explore the possibility of once again offering community programs. The Squannacook River Wildlife Area was dedicated.

October - The Elementary School Planning Committee reported to Selectmen on their study of school space, and work began in the planning of a new elementary school in Townsend. An adult education committee was formed, and began to look into the possibility of offering adult education courses to

residents of 7 area towns. The Historical Society began to look for land to construct a building in which members could meet. Deputy Fire Chief James McGee, 43, passed away after a short illness. The ZBA granted a permit for the town garage.

November - 155 people expressed an interest in the 19 adult education courses offered at NMRS. Vandalism at the kindergarten held at the Congregational Church was reported. Carl B. Willard, a local banker for over 60 years, died suddenly at his home.

December - Delinquent taxes made the news, as over \$5000 in taxes failed to be collected. Selectmen took steps to investigate the tax title property within the town owned by residents who failed to pay their taxes for a number of years. The need to up-date the fire alarm control was explored by the Board of Selectmen. The NMRS budget increased by \$115,952, with the largest increase coming in the area of instruction salaries. Members of the Townsend Amateur Radio Society were kept busy throughout the month handling messages in the National Relay System of the ARRL.

1968
January - Beef at Super Duper sold for 48 cents a pound, pork chops 68 cents and potatoes 39 cents for five pounds. Postmaster Henry Johnson announced increase to 6 cents in stamps. A break was discovered at Cliff's Donut Shop but only cigarettes were taken. For adults only "Valley of the Dolls" was at the theatres. Richard Collette, chairman of selectmen, announced he would not run. A \$30,328 increase on local school budget seen. The elementary school planning committee suggested a new \$1 million elementary school. The Vietnam war took the life of Sgt. Alfred Dwyer, age 31.

February - New school plans were aired by the selectmen. Roy Shepherd was appointed Deputy Chief and Chief Training Officer for the fire department. Townsend Ford was offering the 1967 Mustang for \$2,195. A liquidation sale was held at Brook's Market in West Townsend. Michael Sullivan donated fees he earned for serving as moderator to stimulate interest in town meeting. The Missionary Committee from the Congregational Church heard from their foster son in Vietnam.

March - The town's very first \$1 million budget was to be acted upon at town meeting. Thomas O'Bea, Roderick H. Martin, and Maurice Billings were selectmen. There was indication that the tax may might hold at a \$2.50 increase. The Finance Committee saw an \$8 increase and a committee was formed to study the idea of hiring an outside firm to carry out revaluations. The Eagle Scout Award was presented to Steve Whitman. SP4 David Aho awarded the Bronze Star for valor in Vietnam. 275 calls for aid with water problems were received after heavy rains. J. Vern Quimby was elected Chairman of the Assessors. Fire Chief William Greenough recommended to the selectmen that he be appointed full-time Chief. The Woman's Club celebrated its 35th anniversary.

April - The announcement came that 300 acres would be developed off Fitchburg Road for business and homes, to be named Bayberry Hills Estate. Selectmen were less than pleased with the Cherry Sheet receipts and sought an explanation. New publishers were announced for the *Townsend Times* and *Pepperell Times Free Press*. Easter Ham could be bought at the Super Duper for 39 cents a pound. The Fire Department installed an alarm system. The selectmen were upset over the sales tax receipts. Final preparations were being made for "Townsend Trivia," an original musical comedy.

May - David Raposa was appointed to the police department. "Dirty Dozen" and "A Patch of Blue" were being seen at the cinemas. The tax rate was up \$9 for \$57/thousand. There was no quorum to vote on the NMRS expansion plan. United-Alcon Plastics announced they were coming to town. Robert Francis Kennedy was pictured on the front page. The Lions Club sponsored the new club in Shirley. Mr. and Mrs. Merrill Pierce celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. The town voted yes on the High school expansion plan.

June - Senator John Harrington (D-Lowell) met with the selectmen to answer questions on medicare and other concerns.

Bruce Goyette joined the *Times Free Press* editorial staff. Bayberry Hill plans advanced with homes advertised to sell for \$21,900 (6 room ranch) or a Cape for \$15,900. Richard Smith was to attend the Miami Republican Convention. The Center Fire Company was awarded first place on the Fourth of July for appearance and efficiency.

July - A lightning storm raised the devil in town. The Keefe Bridge was to be re-routed. Town Tots held a Pet Show. Brian Kumpu was pictured in July with his pet duck, Peter Spinney with his guinea pig and Ronnie Spinney with his mouse.

August - Teen-agers were warned in August about loitering. An era ended when the only blacksmith shop, formerly owned by Stanley Fessenden, was razed. It was built in the 1890s. Suburban Gardens open its new produce store on Route 119. A new office opened for G.L. Whitcomb Insurance Co. Fire destroyed a bungalow on Vinton Pond Road. New booking laws were announced by the police, "Black Rock" was the favorite swimming hole and fishing area in the town. The town got a new ambulance. Explorers took first place at a Hollis Muster. \$22,200 reported available for Wallace Hill Road repair. A new gun bill was being contested.

September - Selectmen paid tribute to the late Robert Copeland Jr., who served the town for 20 years. The laundromat next to the donut shop at the center was the scene of a destructive fire with \$1200 in damages. Paula Smith, Jane and Nancy Forest and Mary Smith sold lemonade and homemade cookies to earn money for school clothes. The town got a new social worker named Dennis Joaquin. A meeting was scheduled on the Route 119 speeding problem. Damage and debris were found at the Townsend Center Cemetery. Signs were to be posted on Route 119. A meeting was scheduled to organize a Youth Center. Doug R. Wilkinson took a first in Drag Strip Racing. A ladies shooting club was to be organized in the town.

October - Fessenden Monument was unveiled at Alcon Plastics. The Youth Center opened. David Raposa resigned from the police force in October.

November - Gerald Ingerson was appointed police officer. Bill Bennett was the new manager at Super Duper. Cumberland Farms announced a location in town. The town treasurer was hurt in a two car crash.

December - A four-legged chicken was found at the Apple Meadow Farms. The selectmen discuss the need for an additional cruiser. A stag smashed through a home on Main Street. Ronald Hakola was the recipient of scouting's highest award. Lighting was sought for the VFW Pond for skaters.

1969
January - 1969 began with headlines that read "Unemployment Likely to Raise Worries" in 1969. A total of 401 Townsend residents filed for firearms identification cards when the Mass. Firearms Control Law went into effect three months earlier. Editorials zoomed in on dope pushers with the question "Are dope pushers operating in Townsend?" The selling of the VFW Park Hit the community hard. Joseph Cordio applied for a license to operate a dine and dance he proposed to construct on land off Rt. 119 in Townsend Harbor. Bids for rubbish and garbage collection came in (for both) with a low bid of \$11,700. Assessors reported the town needed to raise 18 percent more revenue than the previous year. Donald Dyer and George Spinney announced their candidacy for Board of Selectmen. Minimum wage was increased for agriculture and farm labor from \$1.35 to \$1.50 per hour. Spaulding School's budget came in with just under a 15 percent increase from \$323,994 to \$370,831. Retiring Mary J. Misner was noted for 17 years of service as treasurer. A plane crashed on Old Fessenden Hill Road. Super Duper advertised soup for 10 cents a can and ham at 78 cents a pound. Sam's Townsend House began featuring "delicious Italian pizza."

February - The month started off with the state suggesting an exchange of property which would turn over the VFW Pond deed to the town. Rodney A. Webster of Barker Hill announced his candidacy for school committee. The selectmen wrote to Gov. Francis Sargent telling him that people are "sick and tired of the Legislature voting programs

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The Reagan/Bush Years: Townsend in the 1980's

Continued from page 42

William May was appointed as his successor. The NMRSD reduced its assessment to the town by \$94,594. Jim Craven of West Townsend was the high bidder at the second auction of Fernald House.

March - The 15 percent cuts to the school budget mandated by Proposition 2½ totalled over \$800,000, and \$300,000 more in state aid cuts were possible. Selectmen agreed to let the courts decide whether the town was liable for the medical costs of Police Officer Anthony McDonald, who injured his back on duty. Vandals destroyed over \$200 in property at the Townsend Rod and Gun Club. Selectman Robert Struthers, Town Moderator Edwin West, and Town Clerk Marilyn MacEachern announced they would seek reelection. Charles Buso again confronted selectmen over landfill operations, charging runoff was contaminating a nearby aquifer. Selectmen vowed to save the condemned Townsend Common bandstand. Population growth meant Townsend would go to two voting precincts.

April - In town elections, Richard Najjar upset incumbent selectman Robert Struthers. School Committee member William Goodwin, Town Clerk Marilyn MacEachern, and Town Moderator Edwin West were re-elected. Charles Buso lost his bid for assessor, Board of Health, and School Committee. Town Meeting voted to spend \$60,000 on trash collection. The School Committee pink slipped 57 teachers for the 1981-82 school year. Resident Kenneth Goss sought permission to place gates closing off an access way to Adams Dam to protect his property from vandalism.

May - Town Meeting voters rejected raising the quorum from 100 to 200, voted to spend \$10,000 to repair Hoyt's Bridge, and passed the 1981-82 school budget with an assessment of \$1,553,636. Repairs to the bandstand were stalled by requirements for liability insurance for workers. Historic District Commission members were concerned over federal and state cuts in funding historic preservation efforts. James Craven withdrew his bid for the Fernald property after land court delays, once again leaving the town with the land. A six-member Recreation Study Committee was appointed to look at possible playground sites.

June - Work on bandstand repairs resumed with the hiring of a new contractor. The Board of Health cleared a plan for 48 units of affordable elderly housing, and decided to wait to deal with drainage problems at the landfill until the second cell was full. The NMRHS Class of 1981 graduated, with valedictorian Tamela Halstead the first ever NMRHS graduate to head on to West Point. Residents sought town aid against gypsy moths devastating trees and greenery. Firefighter Andrew Brown was injured in a brush fire off Burgess Road spotted by a helicopter crew from Fort Devens. Selectmen extended Police Chief William May's contract from one year to three. The School Committee rehired 38 teachers originally laid off for the 1981-82 school year.

July - Selectmen appointed a five-member Personnel Board to standardize town employment practices. School Committee member Janet Rodriguez resigned due to a family move. Selectmen replaced Town Counsel Shattuck with the Boston firm of Hochberg and Schultz. James McCormick became Hawthorne Brook principal. Montachusett Cable Television met mixed reaction to bringing cable to Townsend. Landfill costs continued to mount with \$7,000 more needed to complete it. St. John's Catholic Church welcomed Father Tierney and Sister Monica, and Rev. William Richards became the United Methodist Church's new pastor. The Townsend Lions Club celebrated its 15th anniversary.

August - Selectmen heard a proposal to shut off 23 street lights to stay within budget. Police officer Walter Beese was promoted to sergeant and David Kumpu appointed as a full-time officer. "Stevie Day" was held, with events going to benefit Stevie Spofford, a three year-old Townsend boy in a coma after nearly drowning in June. The 48 units of elderly housing planned for Fitchburg Road hit another delay when all construction bids topped the \$1.9 million limit in



Law and order...The Townsend Police Department, June 29, 1983.

federal funds for the project. William Hubbard was appointed to replace Janet Rodriguez on the School Committee. NMRHS Principal Vincent Franco flipped on resigning, finally leaving the district to head the Mascenic school system in New Hampshire. Concern arose over illegal dumping at the landfill of out-of-town garbage by private contractors.

September - Reigel Foods withdrew a request to sell wine and beer. A local fiber arts group, A Common Thread, displayed work at Townsend Credit Union. The Zoning Board of Appeals denied the Pandiscio Corp.'s permit request for sand and gravel removal. Schools opened to the first year of Proposition 2½ cutbacks, with the loss of programs district-wide and overcrowding at NMRHS due to lack of funds for additional teachers. Ralph Olsen was chosen as the new NMRHS principal. Wiring Inspector John Pelletier confirmed suspicions that building was going on in town without the necessary permits. Townsend Rosicrucians commemorated the construction of the Great Pyramid in Egypt. The Finance Committee rejected Nashoba Tech's request to restore \$20,107 to their budget.

October - Special Town Meeting voters rejected spraying for gypsy moths, but passed all other articles, including upping dog fines, repairs to the "dirt-half" of Blood Road, \$57,974 for NMRSD schools, and \$20,197 for Nashoba Tech to avoid a lawsuit over the violation of the town's membership agreement. Selectmen transferred the liquor license from David McKinley's Townside Restaurant (never rebuilt after burning down) to his father, Donald McKinley for a planned Fitchburg Road restaurant. Hawthorne Brook Principal and Recreation Commission member James McCormick proposed a football field be built at the school. Finance Committee member Sue Lisio resigned. Peter Broschart of Main Street celebrated his 90th birthday. The Conservation Commission was trying to reach an agreement with the Kadar Corporation to prevent pollution of Witches Brook.

November - 134 years of train service to Townsend ended on November 13 when B & M Railroad ceased use of the Townsend line due to deterioration of the road bed. Resident Jim McCaffrey complained about treatment of his wife by an employee of the firm doing the revaluation of Townsend property. The Conservation Commission proposed a wetlands protection bylaw. The Recreation Commission voted to support a proposed football field at Hawthorne Brook. The Finance Committee denied a Board of Health request for \$4,600 more for services provided by the North Central Mental Health Center.

December - Townsend 250th Anniversary Committee members were preparing for festivities beginning in January. The Conservation Commission held an emergency meeting after learning Ernest Koch of Bayberry Hill Road was altering a wetlands area near his home on his neighbors' property without filing with the commission, resulting in a cease and desist order. The Board of Health looked at recycling options. Assessor Elwin Swicker told an all-boards meeting town government would not be able to run in the coming year with the 2½ percent increase permitted under Proposition 2½, and called for an override. The on-going

dispute between the Townsend Ambulance Service and Virginia McDevitt over their failure to re-appoint her a month after she resigned in November 1980 continued before the Board of Selectmen. Recreation Director Carol Vaillancourt resigned for personal reasons. Erlena Flynn was selected over Charles Buso to fill a Board of Health vacancy created by the resignation of Les Weiner. A police cruiser bid was awarded to Natick Auto Sales for \$8,701 for a 1982 Ford LTD.

Townsend's 250th Anniversary

January - Tests of leachate from the landfill indicated no health threat. Volunteer firemen Roy Shepherd, Joseph Shank, and Deputy Chief Tumber fought eight degree cold to save a building at 92 Main Street. The School Committee announced an 8.5 percent budget increase for 1982-83, stating level-funding would mean cuts of \$305,000 at NMRHS, and \$175,000 in Townsend alone. Townsend's 250th Anniversary was kicked off with a dinner dance at the Eastwood Club in Fitchburg. Laura Shifrin was appointed to fill a Board of Assessors vacancy over Charles Buso. Former Townsend resident Blanche (Fessenden) (Morse) Knight, 100, died in California.

February - Tarbell heir William Denen questioned the tax-taking of the 29-acre Tarbell lot in Townsend Harbor in 1960. Selectman Steve Dunbar met with state officials to negotiate for the re-opening of the Townsend rail line for freight use. The School Committee certified the 1982-83 budget at \$9.3 million. The 80 year-old press once used to print the *Townsend Times* was sent to the Museum of Printing in Lowell. Joseph Shank denied charges by the Conservation Commission he was polluting wetlands near his business on Main Street in Townsend Harbor. The School Committee nixed the NMRHS Student Council's proposal to have one student sit on the committee in an advisory capacity. Residents protested the selectmen's approval of a license for a video game center owned by Marjorie Kumpu. The 250th Anniversary Committee sponsored a Family Fun Sunday at Pearl Hill.

March - The Finance Committee announced their opposition to any Proposition 2½ override, and cited concern over a \$22,000 hike in departmental requests for Fiscal Year 1983. Due to four resignations, the Conservation Commission was left with three members. Real estate broker Laura Shifrin resigned from the Board of Assessors over concerns about potential conflicts of interest. Energy advocates urged Townsend to fight Fitchburg Gas & Electric's plan to pass along their losses from the cancelled Pilgrim II nuclear power plant to ratepayers. Residents protested the accuracy of property revaluations done by an outside firm. Finance Committees from Townsend, Pepperell, and Ashby organized to recommend the school budget be increased only by 2½ percent.

April - In town elections, incumbent Selectman Steve Dunbar defeated Dennis Brailley, Town Moderator Edwin West topped William Roche, and Sue Lisio won a seat on the School Committee over William Hubbard. Selectmen supported opposition to a state law allowing research labs to seize animals for testing from town pounds. The School Committee rejected a suggestion

to negotiate the superintendent of schools' contract in open session. Fitchburg Gas & Electric reps came to Townsend to tell customers rates would not go up to offset Pilgrim II losses. Convicts visited NMRHS to teach students a lesson on life in prison. A study by the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission stated Townsend would not have any "major deficiencies" with highways through 2005.

May - Town Meeting passed articles to call for Fitchburg Gas & Electric not to pass along Pilgrim II losses, \$11,000 for a new police cruiser, funds for mental health services and a traffic light at South and Main Streets. The FY 1983 town budget, and 1982-83 budgets for NMRSD and Nashoba Tech passed. An article advocating a nuclear weapons freeze and a wetlands protection bylaw failed. The meeting unanimously passed a \$65,000 commitment for landfill maintenance and \$25,000 per year for five years to construct two new cells at the landfill. Voters also approved Resource Control, Inc.'s proposal to manage the site. Townsend's 250th Anniversary began picking up, steam with events held throughout May. School officials learned repairs to the NMRHS roof would total \$950,000.

June - Plans for a 36,000 square foot shopping mall across from NMRHS were unveiled. Town Meeting continued, with voters opposed to rezoning an area from 201 Main Street to Oak Street from residential to commercial. Spaulding Memorial School's 50th birthday was celebrated. The NMRHS Class of 1982 graduated. A plan to move eighth grade students from NMRHS to the middle schools, and kindergarten classes into elementary schools met with mixed reaction. The state ordered the town to resolve violations and other problems at the landfill by June 15, and found during an inspection that the cheaper lining of lagoons with asphalt instead of plastic led to seepage. Terry Starrett was appointed to the Board of Health by selectmen after tying as a write-in with Allen Aho in the town election. Worcester North Savings Bank launched the Townsend Bandstand Fund to go towards its upkeep. Residents and town officials debated who was responsible for safety procedures around holes being dug off Emery Road. The dramatization of Townsend's history, "A Covenant With Time" by Richard N.

Smith was presented by townspeople, sponsored by the Townsend Couples Club.

July - The 911 emergency telephone line was activated for residents. The Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Historic Districts Commission joined forces for the first time to oversee the reconstruction of Emery Road. Controversy continued over construction at Ronald McLaren's Pine Tree Estates, with town and state officials sparring over building lots. To commemorate Townsend's 250th birthday, a special edition of the *Times-Free Press* was issued. Residents celebrated the town's 250th anniversary on July 24 with a parade, band concert, and the burying of a time capsule at Town Hall to be uncovered in 50 years by Selectmen Jane Jackson, Richard Najjar, and Steve Dunbar. The time capsule contained a brass water meter, highway department maps and papers, a frisbee, 250th anniversary memorabilia, a bottle of leachate from the landfill, fire department artifacts, and other items such as bills, signs, and newspapers.

August - Gary Lorden was the high bidder at \$25,000 in the third auction of the Fernald property. Main Street residents complained to selectmen about foul odors coming from a nearby piggery while the Conservation Commission ruled the owner, Donald Griffin, was exempt from wetlands laws due to agricultural use of his land. An investigation by health officials indicated no health violations at the piggery. Under the Scenic Roads Act, the historic character of Emery Road would be preserved. Four Fitchburg men were charged with the rape of a 17 year-old Townsend woman in a wooded area in town.

September - Planning Board members mulled the future of Townsend with a proposed cluster subdivision on Proctor and Hog Hill Roads. An emergency all-boards meeting was held over the danger of leachate seeping into groundwater aquifers due to cracked asphalt liners at the landfill, and meetings later in the month with state officials and Resource Control, Inc. resulted in plastic liners being installed for \$26,000 to \$32,000. Michael Therrien's dispute with the town over permits for his garage business continued with the town ordering him to cease operations until all necessary permits were granted. The outside revaluation firm came under fire for the nine month delay of tax bills resulting in a \$43,000 loss for Townsend. The Conservation Commission sought help from the Nashua River Watershed Association in establishing a greenway to protect the Squannacook River.

October - No signs of landfill leachate were found in tests near the site. Residents complained about police treatment of individuals leaving a party. Townsend nurse Barbara Estes was aiding Lebanese and Palestinian casualties at American University Hospital in Beirut. Residents of a mobile home on Dudley Road in violation of zoning were told by the town to vacate the land. Selectmen okayed an in-depth look at bringing cable television to Townsend. Town Meeting voters approved the purchase of the Union National Bank for \$110,000 to house town financial offices, funding for landfill repairs, approved a resolution against gun control, and defeated a wetlands protection bylaw and personnel bylaw.

November - Brooks near the

landfill continued to flow clear, without contamination. Library trustees sought \$5,000 from the reserve fund to make roof repairs. The Historic District Commission called for automotive junk at the old Spaulding mills to be cleaned up. George Basbanes of Dunstable donated 11.3 acres in the Meeting House Hill area to Townsend for conservation use. Fitchburg's Resource Recovery Project tried to interest Townsend in joining the trash-burning facility as a landfill alternative, which would have to go to Town Meeting for approval and require the town to pay tipping fees. Townsend officials mulled buying and operating Fitchburg Gas & Electric, which served Townsend, Ashby, Fitchburg, and Lunenburg.

December - Fitchburg Gas & Electric told Townsend the utility was not for sale. Residents petitioned to form a historic district centering around Old Meeting House Road. The Finance Committee sought volunteers for a computer committee. Gary Shepherd won a national 4-H scholarship. The tax rate was set at \$17.62, with \$10.74 to go to schools. Licensing for cable television in Townsend was initiated. Selectmen tentatively moved ahead on a non-binding agreement with Resource Recovery of Fitchburg. Montachusett Employment and Training Program's fuel assistance program was cancelled in Townsend due to lack of interest. North Middlesex agreed to allow the Finance Committee to use school computers for town financial data. Two copies of town zoning bylaws resulted in confusion by town boards, anger among residents, and questions over whether Zoning Board of Appeals decisions based on the incorrect bylaws should be overturned.

1983
January - A four-part series on NMRHS was presented in the *Times-Free Press*, highlighting its educational, financial, and operational aspects. The School Committee certified a \$10.7 million budget for 1983-84, up 18 percent. Townside Restaurant operator David McKinley, his brother Edward, and the property owner Lloyd Bakke were charged with conspiring to burn the restaurant and market place to defraud their insurance company. The McKinleys were charged with arson in 1980, but charges were dismissed due to false testimony by a state fire marshal. Finance Committee member Blair Arsenault called for Town Meeting approval of seven percent pay hikes for police and highway workers. The Conservation Commission asked selectmen to take steps to protect town water quality.

February - Fifteen inches of snow blanketed the town, and selectmen and the Finance Committee disagreed over union pay raises and the use of the former bank that differed from original plans to house the tax collector, assessors, and town clerk. Townsend's oldest resident Lizzie Ormquist turned 100. Selectman Jane Jackson and School Committee member Robert Gourdeau decided not to run for re-election. Selectmen sought assistance from current and former Planning Board members and town counsel in sorting out two sets of zoning bylaws, and the debate over mobile homes as zoning violations continued.

March - School Committee members voted to lay off 53 teachers. Highway Department

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School days...Squannacook Elementary School.

'80's

Continued from page 43

head Raymond Bolden asked for a 43 percent budget increase for Fiscal Year 1984, and the Finance Committee and selectmen worked to keep the town budget within the \$2.5 million available. With the only two seepage dump sites in town closed, Board of Health members were looking for a new site. Highway and fire department workers helped residents try to save their homes as rains caused mudslides on the Townsend-Greenville, NH line and the Squannacook River and other bodies of water in town to swelled their banks. The Finance Committee approved an emergency reserve fund transfer for \$3,800 to repair a fire truck. Tax Collector Marjorie Kumpu's plan to close her office for two weeks caused conflict with selectmen and Finance Committee members.

April - Finance Committee members criticized Highway Superintendent Ray Bolden over high spending. The town hall annex opened in the former Union National Bank with the offices of Tax Collector Marjorie Kumpu, Town Treasurer Ann Salo, and Town Accountant Bernadette Bennett. Developer Ronald MacLaren was cited with violating wetlands regulations after state and town officials visited his Pine Tree Estates. Townsend's first woman selectman Jane Jackson left office after seven years, and James Somerville defeated Laura Shifrin, David McKinley, and Penny Seipold to succeed her. Town Moderator Edwin West defeated William Roche, Bill Roberts won a Townsend seat on the School Committee, and George King beat incumbent Board of Health member Terry Starrett.

May - Pine Tree Estates residents and town officials met over the development's problems, which included tainted retention ponds and towering piles of gravel. Cable television moved forward in Townsend as technical issues were decided. Tyler Road residents opposed Keating Company's plans for a sand and gravel operation in their neighborhood. Town Meeting approved the FY 1984 budget with a seven percent



Old Glory...Arthur Hegland raises the flag for the Townsend VFW. (Capers photo)

hike. Richard A. Keefe, who served as the town's first regular police officer, and on the fire department died at age 87. Police Chief William May objected to the B & M Railroad storing its boxcars on the tracks in Townsend.

June - Selectmen continued negotiations with Pine Tree Estates developer Ronald MacLaren over safety issues, and tempers flared as Selectmen Richard Najjar and Steve Dunbar disagreed over the resolution. The Atwood lot, bequeathed to the town, was considered for recreation fields. The NMRHS Class of 1983 graduated. The Zoning Board of Appeals approved a permit for the Keating Co. gravel operation on Tyler Road. Parents sought more funds for quality and Talented and Gifted education in schools. The NMRHS tennis team won their first Wachusett League Championship. Residents complained to town officials again

about the smell coming from Donald Griffin's piggery on Main Street. The Board of Health rejected allowing "neutralized hazardous waste" sludge to be dumped at the landfill. John Ojala was honored with a retirement party after more than 16 years in maintenance at Grotton School.

July - Selectmen voted to seize the performance bond for Pine Tree Estates, ending five years of controversy over Tamarack Lane flooding and other safety issues. A scheduled Special Town Meeting failed to happen due to the lack of a quorum. Plans to improve the North Middlesex football field with new bleachers and lights to allow night games were revealed. Police Officer Anthony McDonald, who injured his back on duty in 1977, filed to sue the town for \$100,000 after being terminated in 1982. The annual summer tradition on band concerts on the common continued. Twenty-one Tyler Road residents

filed suit against the Zoning Board of Appeals over a gravel permit issued to the Keating Company. A contract with Ayer was approved for seepage dumping. Townsend Postmaster Henry Johnson retired.

August - Board of Health members met with Old Turnpike Road contractor Jim Adams over illegal dumping on Bridle Path Road, ordering him to restore the area. Restoration of Reed House in Townsend Harbor was planned by Historical Society President Guenther Wehran. Timberlee Park residents protested a 200 percent increase in water bills, granted by the state Department of Public Utilities to the Witches Brook Water Company. Owner Robert Hicks cited inflation, increased usage, and needed meters as the reason for the hike. Roy Shepherd was appointed ambulance director and Andrea Wood to the Personnel Board. Selectman James Somerville said funding for elderly housing hinged on creating a housing authority, the lack of which caused an earlier plan for 48 units to never be built. Repairs on the NMRHS roof were underway. The Hawthorne Brook summer band played on the common. Dr. Lawrence Churchville III joined the family practice on Main Street. The School Committee and Townsend, Pepperell, and Ashby began a battle over who was entitled to \$1.4 million in state Chapter 70 funds. George Garrity, 59, was killed by a falling tree limb.

September - Still without a school budget, NMRHS member towns considered a new figure of \$10,029,000. Donald Griffin filed suit against the Zoning Board of Appeals over conditions set in his variance for a Main Street farmstand. Timberlee Park residents organized to battle water rates, submitting a 500-signature petition to the Department of Public Utilities. A new era began at NMRHS with the first night football game, with the Patriots defeating the Ayer Panthers for the first time since 1972. A proposal for a Mason Road gravel removal operation met with opposition from residents at a standing-room-only Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Selectmen were again called on to enforce conservation regulations with Pine Tree Estates developer Ronald MacLaren. School Committee members approved an in-house suspension program for NMRHS. William Kao sought the formation of a Harbor Pond Study Committee.

October - The School Committee refused to give up on the \$1.4 million in Chapter 70 funds, but Townsend came out on top. Remarks by School Committee member Sue Lisio after Townsend voted to reduce its school assessment prompted calls for her resignation. Two years of residents' complaints on odors from the piggery resulted in a Board of Health, state and federal investigation. Faulty wiring led to a fire that levelled a shed at the Trux home on Townsend Hill Road. A compromise was neared on wetlands violations by Joseph Pandiscio, Jr. on property off Wyman and Fitchburg Roads. Historical Society plans called for renovations on the Coopers and Grist Mill in addition to the Reed House. Nashoba Communications of Westford was awarded Townsend's cable contract over Northeast Cablevision, and United Video Cablevision. Arthur Bormann, Sr., a former Fessenden Company and highway department employee, died at age 79. The Finance Committee refused a \$10,000 reserve fund transfer to hire two seasonal highway employees.

November - Dispatcher Janice O'Connor was reinstated by selectmen after defending herself against charges she could not perform the work adequately. Townsend VFW Post 6538 sponsored a Veterans Day 10-kilometer road race. The town water department and Witches Brook Water Company discussed mutual aid in emergencies and efficient use of their systems. The school budget was finally settled at \$9.5 million. North Middlesex Business Manager Charles Leonard and Food Services Director Gary Entwistle resigned. Sally Tracy was appointed Postmaster. Legal action was started against Pine Tree Estates developer Ronald MacLaren for wetlands violations by the Conservation Commission and selectmen. The Times-Free Press announced their operations would move to Route 2A in Ayer.

December - School principals outlined for the School Committee where they would cut to meet the \$9.5 million budget, and Townsend made its first assess-



Elsie Lowe.

ment payment since refusing to pay without a lower budget. Post 10 Explorers completed an in-depth land navigation course. Timberlee Park residents finally got a hearing with the Department of Public Utilities on their 200 percent water rate hike. North Middlesex member towns mulled an outside audit of the school system. Former selectman Jane Jackson was selected for the new Housing Authority, along with Richard Collette, David Curtis, and Celia Koski. The Task Force on Educational Excellence for the school district met to discuss educational standards of the schools and graduation requirements.

January - The year began on a historical note for the area with the Hartnett family purchasing the Ayer-based Public Spirit from John McMasters. Townsend began the year with some changes in town policies being considered. Bill Kao was recommended to fill a vacated seat on the Conservation Commission. A benefit and welcome home dance was held for Paige and Bob McDonald, who had been in a serious car accident. Tax Collector Marjorie Kumpu became a Certified Mass. Municipal Collector. Hiring policies in the town remained a hot issue. The Bread Box opened a bakery on Route 13. Superior Court denied a temporary restraining order against P. J. Keating Company. Emergency personnel pulled together in fighting a severe ice storm. The fear of pollution to the Squannacook River appeared in headlines.

February - Suspects were arresting in a breaking and entering at the Old Brick Store. "On Golden Pond" and "Chariots of Fire" were showing in the theaters. A home in town could be purchased for roughly \$80,000. A salt shed would be sought at town meeting. Results from a questionnaire showed the town favored new businesses. Millie Blood celebrated her 80th birthday. Aubrey Wornham and Charles (Dan) Gould were honored for their service to the Rod and Gun Club. Town Counsel Gordon Schultz described the Conservation Commission as a "board to be reckoned with." Mary E. Smith, a 78 year-old grandmother, was the winner of \$100,000 in the state lottery. Flames gutted the two story home of Alan and Sue Johnson on Lunenburg Road. H&V joined the Harbor Pond Water Study. A Special Permit for a gas station on Main Street was denied.

March - James Somerville chaired a committee to study management organization and work flow efficiency of town government. Petroleum-based contaminants were found at the landfill. Thomas MacMaster, an 8th grader at Hawthorne Brook, took first place in the VFW "Future of America" contest. The town saw a need to take immediate action at the landfill. The Harbor Village Mall was proposed. Incumbent Richard Najjar and James W. Shea were vying for a selectmen's seat. A cease and desist order was issued to stop construction of a gas station on Main Street. Norman Cote, a resident and teacher at North Middlesex, moved from the town.

April - Tax Collector Marjorie Kumpu announced she would run again. The "Unsung Hero Award" in honor of Daniel Gray was started at NMRHS to be awarded to a male or female athlete annually.

May - The United Methodist Church sponsored its third annual Spring Festival and Craft Show on the common. Hawthorne Brook eighth grader Tom MacMaster placed second in the state VFW Ladies Auxiliary "Future of America" essay contest. The NMRHS baseball team captured its second Wachusett League Championship in three years, and the school won the league's Bentley Award for the school with

the best record overall during the year.

June - North Middlesex received \$14,000 in federal funding for a high school office simulation program. The 147th Townsend Band Concert season opened, with the Townsend Military Band performing under the direction of George Talcott. NMRHS was the site of a debate for the Fifth District Congressional seat, including candidates State Sen. Chester Atkins (D-Concord), State Sen. Philip Shea (D-Lowell), and Republicans Gregory Hyatt and Thomas Tierney.

July - Beth Parsons was reappointed to chair the Conservation Commission. Ruth Shepherd was honored at the Golden Agers meeting for her years of service to the club. The 59th reunion of the Class of 1925 was held. A decision to allow P. J. Keating to continue removing gravel was appealed. Dr. Martin Spiller was the new dentist in town. Laura Shifrin, part owner of Harbor Realty, was chosen Realtor of the Year. Selectmen suggested "flying in" help for the new treasurer. The town took time out to recognize National POW/MIA Day.

August - The month began with citizens protesting rate hikes by Fitchburg Gas and Electric. Nashoba Cable got the green-light in Townsend with a provisional license. Townsend resident Debra Jones broke the 12-hour U.S. cycling record. A gala opening was held for the new Sporting Goods, Inc. Residents of Aries Lane faced natural and manmade disturbances including water seepage and erosion. Harbor Village Mall was expected to open in the fall of 1985. Questions arose about Meetinghouse Hill Road and to whom it belonged.

September - Selectmen began the month by opposing a rate hike by the Fitchburg Gas and Electric Co. The town sought a grant to restore Harbor Pond. New zoning by-law were proposed. Police Chief William May recommended that William Lussier be issued a Governor's Citation for Heroism for his handling of a motor vehicle accident. The attorney general turned thumbs down on by-law amendments.

October - The Zoning Board of Appeals suspended action on Alex Diodati's gas station. Kerry Coder, the selectmen's executive secretary, resigned. Kenneth Goss proposed a small shopping center on Route 13. The Housing Authority proposed a 30-unit housing project. Jack Lawlor became the new Director of Recreation. A Gravel By-Law Committee was proposed. Townsend Congregational Church celebrated their 250th anniversary. Gregg Hyatt, congressional candidate visited the town. Selectmen gave the Housing Authority full backing for a worthy project. A record number of voters registered.

November - Fifty new homes were proposed on West Meadow Road. The Beauregard's House of Crafts went up in flames. Timothy Edwards Night Spot was found at fault in a closing violation. The Conservation Commission donated trees to help beautify and fortify the banks of the Squannacook River. Tom Kao received a personal letter from President Ronald Reagan thanking him for his support.

December - Selectmen approved a five percent payroll increase. "Townsend Cares" was formed to raise money for Ethiopia. Town Accountant Martin Goldman was terminated. Ground was being prepared for a 16-car parking lot behind the post office. Celia Koski was appointed executive secretary.

January - "Townsend Cares," a campaign started in December 1984, raised over \$11,000 for Ethiopian famine victims. Selectmen and the fundraising drive chairpeople Charline Lloyd and Neal Lund went to the Stase House to formally present the earnings to Grassroots International to be distributed in the hunger-ravaged African nation. Governor Michael Dukakis presented Lloyd and Lund a proclamation commending Townsend for its efforts in raising the \$11,000.

February - Artist Samuel Thorpe's exhibit of paintings of Townsend highlighted a quiet month in the town's history. The paintings depicted scenes around the town over the 26 years Thorpe had spent in Townsend to date, and were displayed in the town library.

March - Edward Gokey, 24, of Lunenburg was found dead in the woods at Pearl Hill State Park. An autopsy performed later revealed

Continued on page 45

WEBBER LUMBER

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33

BIG SALE

Our Biggest Pressure Treated Sale of the Year!

Prices will not be this low again during the season!

- Our buying commitments to our suppliers allows us to pass the savings on to you.
- Place your order at any of our locations, or by phone during this sale.
- A 50% deposit will lock in the sale pricing on your order.
- All orders placed will be delivered by April 30

	8'	10'	12'	14'	16'
2x6	3 ⁹⁹	4 ⁹⁹	5 ⁹⁹	—	7 ⁹⁹
2x8	—	6 ⁹⁹	7 ⁹⁹	—	10 ³⁹
2x10	—	—	12 ³⁹	—	16 ⁴⁹
2x12	—	—	15 ⁰⁰	—	21 ³⁹
4x4	5 ¹⁹	7 ¹⁹	8 ⁷⁹	—	—
4x6	9 ¹⁹	11 ⁴⁹	12 ⁹⁹	—	16 ⁹⁹

	8'	10'	12'	14'	16'
2x4	2 ⁶⁹	3 ²⁹	3 ⁹⁹	—	5 ⁴⁹

19 ⁹⁹	Ea.
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8 ⁹⁹	Ea.
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3 Step	5 ⁹⁹
4 Step	6 ⁹⁹
5 Step	8 ⁹⁹

15 ⁹⁹

190 Main St. - Rte. 9
Leicester, MA
508-892-1851
Monday-Friday 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

235 East Main St. - Rte. 16
Milford, MA
508-473-4500
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

13 Elm St. - Rte. 13
Townsend, MA
508-597-6335
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

'70's

Continued from page 40

on lower Main.

December - Selectmen urged the establishment of an Industrial Development Commission. Coffee was selling for 88 cents a pound and cereal for 78 cents a box at Super Duper. Construction was underway for the new home of B&L Sales at the Shopping Center. Samuel Briguglio was appointed water commissioner. The Family Federal Saving and Loan Association announced they were coming to town. Laura Russo won the P&C Shopping Spree. The Snow-Blazers offered property owners free service.

1975

January - Four police officers were reinstated with back pay. Wood was selling for \$60 a cord. "Airport 1975" and "Towering Inferno" were showing at the movies. Laura Rousseau won the PTO's shopping spree at P&C. Discharged police officers returned to duty and the International Brotherhood of Police Officers said this was "first of its kind and the best we've ever won." Norman E. Johnson, Jr., of Shirley was appointed to the police force. John O'Connell resigned from the Health Board. Mr. and Mrs. Howard Tourville celebrated their 35th anniversary. Country Craftsmen opened on Main Street. A local chapter of Trout Unlimited was organized. William Wornham was appointed to the Health Board.

February - This month showed the highway department over-drawing on their budget due to the cost of snow removal. The police department reported activities had doubled, due in part, to the increase in homes and population. It was determined that the water system in the town was poor but expansion impossible. Kerry Codyer was appointed administrative assistant. The Common fence was to be repaired.

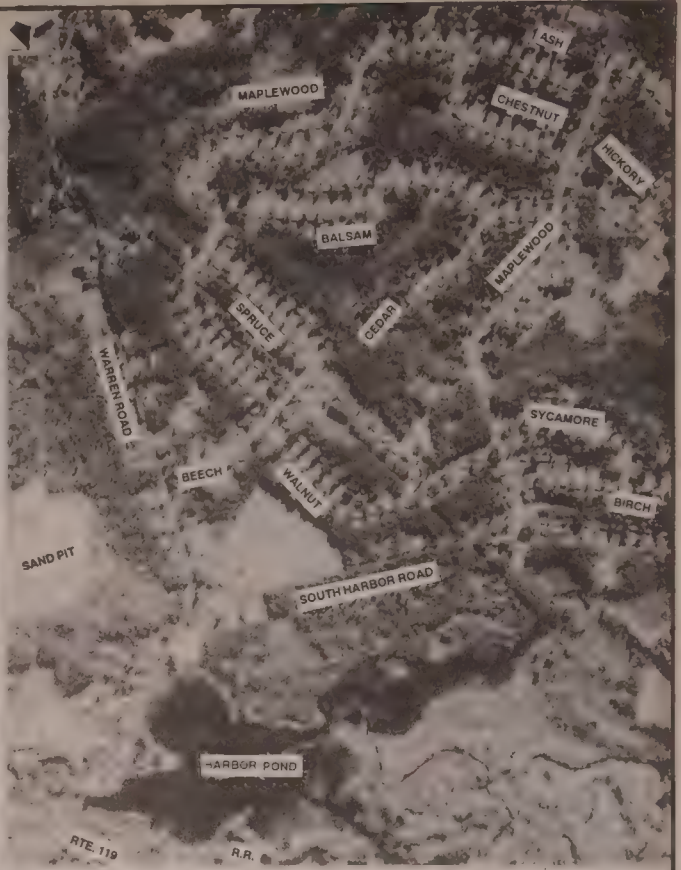
March - Former Police Sergeant Gerald Ingerson required reinstatement, saying he had been "wrongfully fired." Family Federal Savings opened. Leon S. Marshall Sr., a member of the Fire Department for 15 years, passed away at age 75. April - Doug Gale had the largest catch during the Fishing Derby. Mr. and Mrs. Harry Shattuck celebrated their 60th anniversary. It was proposed that the Common be an historic district. A 35 foot new flag pole was placed on Memorial Common. A \$5 million suit was filed by developers Reagan, McKenna and Hicks. Officials and town counsel failed to appear at a back pay hearing.

April - Ken Connors upset incumbent candidate for the Health Board, and Alan Foresman won another 3 years on the Board of Selectmen. Illegal dumping was discovered. The town held its Bicentennial Kick-off with new Memorial Common dedication. 41 officials were served complaints by the federal Marshall. A full liquor license was granted to the Harbor Package Store. Water system improvement were reported to cost \$7 million. A farewell reception was held for Rev. Edwin Hoover from the United Methodist Church. The Lions Club erected a memorial in front of the church. Post office construction was due to start.

June - Rev. Andrew LaPenta was appointed new minister at the Methodist Church. \$50,000 was requested at town meeting for defense of 51 officials and voters approve the expenditure, while the back pay for the fired police officers totaled \$128,650. Augustine Buda celebrated a 35th anniversary. Rev. Paul Shire from the Congregational Church accepted a position in Walpole. Ike Chammes and Aubrey Wornham trapped a large raccoon at the home of Steve Brown. The tax rate showed a decrease of \$2, making it \$32/thousand.

July - The Golden Class Reunion of the Class of 1925 was celebrated. The town's biggest parade staged by the Fire Department to commemorate its 100th anniversary attracted 25,000. Rex Trailer was featured in the parade. A judge issued temporary injunctions on payment of legal fees for the town's "41." A Squannacook River project was launched by Evolution, Inc., while the Police Department located a marijuana patch on Adams Road.

August - The bandstand on the Common was spruced up by volunteer teenagers. Stephen W. Keefe Jr., a native son, passed away. Carol Stone won \$4,000 in the Mass Sweepstakes. There was a new Jaycees Chapter in the



What a difference a decade makes...Two aerial photos of Townsend Harbor show how the area grew in 10 years. At left, 1970 and, right, 1980.

town. Donald MacEachern and Peter Morris were appointed to the Planning Board. Congressman Paul Tsongas discussed the energy crisis with constituents. A rock concert was held on the Common. The Eclipse II Company won two first places in local musters.

September - Nine year old Dana Roberts raised an infant squirrel to the point it could fend for itself. A leash law became effective. Another court case loomed. An elderly man was fatally injured in a motor vehicle accident. Firemen bested their sister department in a softball game for the Jimmy Fund. Cereal sold for 48 cents, peanut butter for 58 cents at Super Duper and you could rent an apartment for \$188 a month. Golden's was to open a new store in town.

October - Memorial Common got a massive face lift. Judges lifted \$20,000 of the \$50,000 approved by the taxpayers. A tennis court was to be repaired at Fessenden Park. Selectmen's meeting were to be taped and the Health Board was subpoenaed.

November

The Bicentennial Commission announced it would sponsor the tree lighting on the Common. A Planning Board member was denied the right to hire a private attorney and Ed Dow from the Health Board said the board was spending money they didn't have.

December - The Firefighters Monument was unveiled during ceremony on the Town Common. Over 400 attended the tree lighting. Richard Jarvi resigned from the Board of Health.

1976

January - The Town Forest Committee reported that someone had cut lumber in the town owned forest. A federal judge dismissed complaints against 25 town officials. A fundraiser began for a new ambulance. A Townsend family become homeless following a fire. Police reported 26 percent increase in activities. A proposal for a pistol range in back of the highway garage came under fire. The month saw lots of snow, and at one point, it was 32 degrees below zero in the center of town. Former firefighter George Shepherd passed away. The Memorial Hall Stove, a 1904 Glenwood Wood Stove, was auctioned off for \$326. Timberlee Park residents complained about snow removal.

February - Heather Robes, age 9, earned seven trophies in bowling. The Building Committee advanced plans for a new middle school. The new owner of the Turnpike Road Garage applied for a Class III license. The Townsend Police Union became a reality.

March - A new sanitary landfill was under consideration. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Brown celebrated their 48th anniversary. A school construction bond was issued, and for the first time, a middle school passed the town meeting stage by

a vote of 120 to 105. Police Officers Norman Johnson and William Rousseau Jr., assisted the stork, helping to deliver a baby boy, David Rosse, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert McMasters.

April - The Larco Pattern Company was contracted to manufacture a wooden pattern for a Howitzer used in the battle of the Revolution as a contribution to the 200th birthday celebration. Town Counsel said "no" to back pay for police overtime. The Quilt Workers were honored as the Bicentennial Quilt made it debut. The Fire Department responded to five woodland fires. The legal fees, to date, for several past and present town officials, totaled \$50,000. The upcoming town election triggered little interest. The Historical Society presented a Three Century Fashion Show. The Brownies donated puppets to Nashoba Community Hospital patients.

May - New Board of Selectmen members were Ronald Ranzaniemi, Alan Foresman and Jane Jackson. A vote was taken to renovate Memorial hall \$60,000 worth. After a recount, Linda Raines assumed the recreational post. Police Wives took on Firemen's spouses and the police wives won in softball. Residents sought the cleanup of the Squannacook River. John Forbes Sr. from Ashby wanted the middle school vote considered invalid. Rev. John Mingus assumed pastorate duties at the Congregational Church. Robert Hicks, a developer, still sought \$1500 for an unused permit.

June - A Dixieland Band entertained on the Common. Sterilite employees voted to join the union. The Class of 1926 held its reunion.

July - The tax rate dropped \$2 to \$30 thousand. NEBS held its 14th annual Employee Meeting. Grave markers showed an early resident of Townsend was born on July 4, 1776. Former Police Chief Wilfred Hamel passed away. Former owner of a funeral home, Harry Knight, also passed away. Howard Barkhouse retired after almost 20 years of service as custodian at Spaulding School. The Lions Club honored former members Thomas O'Bea and Fennio Sawin. A small craft shop was approved for the Harbor. Residents celebrated the nation's 200th birthday while the Military Band observed its 138th season.

August - The Hancock 1, the town's new handtub, made its debut. The Common and the bandstand suffered vandalism. \$26,000 was proposed for a new landfill study. A junk license for a Turnpike Road business was revoked. Governor Michael Dukakis said he could be of no help in the police back pay issue. Harry Knight was honored at a memorial service. The police chief talked with selectmen about

vandalism on the Common. 83 citizens petitioned the selectmen to investigate harassment and abuse of citizens by the police.

September - The Selectmen ratified the police contract. A new dump site was being consider near the Poor Farm. Former Dog Officer Gus Elliott sued the town for \$138.12.

The middle school project was moving off the drawing board. The first tennis tournament ended well after two days of competition. Barry C. Brown was appointed full time police officer. The Historical Society planned a semi-formal ball. Voters approved pay raises totalling \$27,301 with only 4 percent of the voters making the decision. The town lost its court case but still saved money. Elsa Williams, Inc. held a groundbreaking ceremony. A tri-town building inspector position was approved by the state.

October - Thirty-five new homes were proposed for Spaulding Street. A permit was requested for an addition to the Reed Homestead. An alternative entrance to the new middle school cost the town \$30,000. A new professional building was under construction on Main Street. Mary Jane Barber was the assistant minister for the Congregational Church. Anna May was honored for her involvement in community activities.

November - You could purchase 1 to 3 acres, 3 bedroom home for \$36,900 or a four room Ranch house for \$9,900. William Rousseau was appointed Civil Defense Director. The 1975 Ford was being shown at Townsend Ford for \$4,995 and a 1975 Mercury Wagon for \$4,895. The 4th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner was served to the elderly at the Congregational Church. Teen Time at the First Baptist Church attracted many area youths. The Bicentennial Commission immortalized the town history by erecting four granite markers throughout the town. Lower speed zones were recommended for two town streets. Selectmen pursued a grant for water system. Apple Meadow Fabrics, Inc. opened its doors on Route 13. The month ended with Adam DeMonaco being saved from drowning by a teacher and youth.

December - Fort Devens saluted Townsend. More development was proposed. John Forest, the town's youngest businessman, launched his own major appliance service. A liquor license transfer was requested for the Wren Cafe. A truck heavily damaged the W. Townsend Bridge, and plans called for repairs in the spring. The fire department had a new aerial ladder. Townsend Liquor also requested a transfer of license. A fire gutted a Battery Road home. Selectmen Jane Jackson expressed dissatisfaction with town counsel's performance.

1977

January - Police dismissal case

was heard in federal court. The VFW Pond was to get lighting. Townsend Ford was awarded the bid for two cruisers. The Highway Department reported their machinery in bad shape. Mary Alice McFague, member of the NMR School Committee, succumbed to illness at age 44. The Bicentennial Commission ended its job by presenting town officials with the bicentennial flag of Townsend. A drug raid netted \$100,000 in Cocaine. The town assumed ownership of the VFW Pond area. A blaze heavily damaged a 200 year old farmhouse owned by Fire Chief William Greenough. There was a new drop-in Center for Seniors. The Highway Department was commended for the job they did on snow removal despite some of their equipment not being operable. A fund was started for the Greenough family.

February - Real Estate Broker Tom Kao accused banks of monopolizing the town's banking industry. Arthur Elbthal sued town officials for \$10 million. A new Emergency Assistance group was formed in town. Carl Hussey fought termination of his rubbish-garbage contract. The Congregational Church invited everyone to participate in "Celebrate Snow" on the Common. Rev. Thomas Hawxwell was assigned interim minister at the First Baptist Church. E.A. Spaulding Rebekah Lodge was to merge with Groton's Middlesex Lodge after 82 years of continual fellowship in the community. Cobb Breeding Company showed an interest in acquiring 150 acres for chicken breeding purposes. Dennis Jahne was appointed to the Planning Board. Elbthal's suit was dropped temporarily. The Old District School property on Bayberry Hill was sought for a house. The town saw a deficiency of \$8,000 in Revenue Sharing. "Rocky" and "The Enforcer" were showing at the theatres and voters approved \$30,000 for highway equipment. Elbthal told the town he would sue. Samuel Thompson resigned from the Planning Board. NEBS offered 415,000 shares of common stock to public. The town had a new dump site.

March - More conflicts emerged in the Elbthal case. William Shattuck III served as the interim town counsel. The Civil Defense announced the formation of a Fire Dept. Auxiliary. The new branch of Fitchburg Savings was coming to town. The Planning Board extended permits to Elbthal. The selectmen discussed breaking of ground for the middle school. The Squannacook went wild from rain and melting snow, causing roads to be closed off, and the area snow storms with high winds created near disasters in the town. Nashoba Health found wells contaminated. The budget figures were found to be altered in the town report. Brian Anderson was Senator for a Day at the Mass.

Student Government Day program.

April - Townsend was to have a foot patrol officer, groundbreaking for the new bank took place and town hall renovations were discussed. The Recreation Commission eyed the former Times Free Press building on Jeffs. Council on Aging opened an office on Main Street. Donald LaRose was granted a license to open a pizza and sandwich shop on Main Street. Julian Bolden resigned from the police force. Erving Marshall Jr. was appointed a full-time patrolman. The new ambulance arrived. The tax rate was set showing an \$8 hike. Debbie Quimby, age 13, was reported missing.

June - Water restrictions were imposed in June. The oldest resident, Ira "Bud" Carlton, celebrated 95 years. Arnold Niemi, selectman from 1958-1962, passed away. The Hartmann twins were the valedictorians at graduation. The town had a \$339,454 new standpipe. Housing for the Elderly became a possibility.

July - The tax rate stood at \$40/thousand. Police back pay was approved. The Hancock 1 was still #1 in N.E. Muster competition. The local Youth Conservation Corp. opened the old CC road at Willard Brook. Three months had passed and the 13 year old was still missing. The Farmer in the Deli came into being. The Class of 1937 held its reunion.

August - Cooper's Keg was denied an entertainment license. The middle school was going up. A fire gutted an Elm Street home. The 1975 Ford LTD sold for \$4,995 at Townsend Ford.

September - Two businesses opened, Rousseau's Service Station and Bolden's Outfitter Sport Shop. The First Baptist Church celebrated its 150th birthday. Lights went out on Main Street. The highway personnel voted to join a union.

October - The Towne Shop opened on Main Street. Lloyd Gray was appointed dog officer. Explorers and Snow Blazers were to rebuild the twin bridges spanning the Squannacook River. Selectmen considered package store license for Old Brick Store.

November - Worcester North Savings of Fitchburg sought to open a branch in town. The Old Brick Store was granted the liquor license. A former Winchester Inn site was approved for a municipal parking lot.

December - Complaints were made about intensified operations at "Uncle Willy's" Snack Bar. Renovations at the Town Hall were going well. A restaurant opposite the high school was to reopen.

1978

January - Superintendent of Schools Peter Dugan never fully recovered from a stroke and passed away.

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Into the '80's

Continued from page 41

ed away at age 57, Cub Scouts decided to hold "Rocket" not "Pinewood" Derby. Mr. and Mrs. John D. L. Bailey celebrated their 60th anniversary. Lawyers argued the fate of Kao's Real Estate Office. Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Adams sold the Townsend Shopping Center to Ernest Koch of Alcoa Realty Trust from Tyngsboro. Townsend went over the airways to get a quorum at town meeting. Police expressed concern over town hall renovations. Voters approved an expenditure of \$141,000 for on-going water main project from federal grant monies. One of the worst winter storms hit the area late January and the town experienced the heaviest snowfall in years. Headlines reported that Town Hall was bugged but only with a variety of insects. Town Clerk issued warning about failure of owners to restrain their dogs from harming the deer population. A Kao variance was denied by Superior Court.

February - The "41 Club" and Kao litigations continued to dominate the news. The area was hit by another record breaking northeaster with winds up to 90 mph in the Blizzard of '78. The first resident to submit her nomination paper to Town Clerk Marilyn MacEachern was Marjorie Kumpu, collector of taxes. A family of five was left homeless after a fire on Brookline Street owned by Robert Gillette. Town Accountant Velma Smith announced her retirement. Unrest was noted in the town due to the possibility of an increase in taxes. The Townsend Elderly Housing Corporation held its very first meeting. Nearly \$10,000 was reported as being spent on snow removal during the recent blizzard. William Wornham sought the position of Civil Defense Director.

March - The town was suffering growing pains and there was talk of a building moratorium. \$40,000 more was needed for legal fees in the continuing saga of Kadar vs. Milbury. The Jaycees initiated a program to number all the homes in the community. A new singles group met for the first time. Winter took its toll with the winter operations account \$5,450 in the red. The Annual Town Report was to be dedicated to Arthur Verney, a former selectman who had also held almost every other major position in town government. Hillside Acres, a 13 house lot sub-division, received negative reaction from the town. A 2 hour hearing produced mostly negative comments on humanistic education in the schools. It was decided in this month that the town needed new by-laws to protect the town's water supply. Another 192 new homes were proposed for the town. The town looked at a possible \$20 tax hike, the budget showed an increase of \$778,000 and fiscal caution was urged. Easter found old man winter still hanging around.

April - The month began with complaints of "terrible" phone service in the town. A ribbon cutting ceremony for the opening of the Fitchburg Savings Bank took place. The Townsend Food Co-op opened its doors to the public. Spring anglers found "flood" fishing on the Squannacook. The Middle School stuck to its grand opening date of September.

\$185,000 was needed to open a new dump. The new History of Townsend was being compiled and written by a dedicated group of citizens. There were problems with the Civil Defense directorship. Opening Day of fishing season saw the temperature reading below zero but 12 year old David Bolduc caught himself a nice trout anyway. Robert Struthers was elected to the Board of Selectmen. The police confiscated \$2,000 worth of drugs.

May - Voters approved a new lot size of 2 acres for a new home. The Worcester North Savings Bank opened on Main Street. Ronald Rajaniemi was re-elected chairman of the selectmen. Five long session of town meetings and a \$10 tax hike were announced. Another \$11,000 was approved at town meeting to cover legal fees for 11 of the present and past 41 town officials. The Women's Guild observed its 25th anniversary. The water expansion projects in town became stagnant. Drainage problems on Emery Road continued. Kadar Corporation talked about more development in Timberlee Park. Water restrictions were once again put in place. A 26 year old resident was killed in a motorcycle accident on Route 119. The Townsend House Restaurant donated life saving equipment to the Ambulance Service. A moratorium passed at town meeting with lots of emotion. The Board of Fire Engineers became an eleven member board.

July - The Class of 1925 celebrated its 53rd reunion in the Garden Room at the Bull Run in Shirley. Developer Robert Hicks said of a two year building moratorium, "Controlled growth gets to be no growth." The Fire Department received its new pumper at a cost of \$57,266. The water main extension was underway from Cross Street along Route 13 to Dudley Road. Due to technicalities and legalities, voters would be asked at a second town meeting to say "yes" to a new solid waste landfill off Greenfield Road. Lonnie Eaton took two years to make an eagle from metal which was valued at \$10,000. "Jaws 2" and "Grease" were movie fare. Evolution, Inc. was near completion in building a log cabin in the state forest off Dudley Road.

August - An Edwards Street man, Robert Athorn, narrowly escaped death when an explosion occurred in his garage. Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Wornham celebrated their Golden wedding anniversary. Dan Arsenault built a solar heating unit which aided in keeping the water in his swimming pool warm. The Cherry Sheet was cheerier with Townsend getting a share of \$168,000. The foot bridge spanning Pearl Brook being built by the Youth Conservation Corp was near completion. A Coon Hunters Jamboree was sponsored by the Rod and Gun Club. Complaints were lodged by residents about unlawful filling of wetlands by Kadar Corp causing flood problems. Brookside of Townsend, Inc. had buses lined up and ready to roll back to school. Double sessions were announced until completion of the new middle school. Builders expressed unhappiness with the building moratorium.

September - Heartless vandals hit the Highland Street Cemetery



Contemporary business...Townsend Floors & Interiors. (Mitchell photo)

in September. The Couples Club painted the old Cooper Shed owned by the Historical Society. Stanley Fessenden, associated with the Fessenden Company, maker of wooden barrels, passed away. Two killer dogs were on the loose. Michele Goodwin re-opened her School of Dance on Elm Street. Bourke Quinlan, Jr., received top honors for riflery at the conclusion of the 1978 season of Mass. Junior Conservation Camp. The tax rate decreased by \$8. Dukakis garnered 177 votes to King's 162 in the state primary. The newest restaurant in town was the Hay Loft on Route 119. The month ended with Robert and Michael Therrien asking if the town had sufficient police protection since they had been robbed twice in their home.

October - The month began on a happy note when two missing teenagers were found safe, after being lost in the woods. The Robert Hamiltons celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary. The Old Friends consignment shop opened on Main Street. The Jaycees neared their goal in purchasing the "Jaws of Life" for the Fire Department. The West Village Trading Post was the newest antique shop in town. A History of Townsend, *Divinity and Dust* by Richard Smith, made the headlines. John Slattery, a Scottish rock star, visited Townsend. Judy Hanciewicz was appointed Town Accountant. A Benefit Dance held at the Blanchard's Barn caused several complaints from residents. The Historical Society held an Open House to introduce Richard's Smith book.

November - The Elderly Housing Corporation passed a milestone with the option to buy 15 acres of land off Fitchburg Road. Brownies in Troop 654 appeared on the Uncle Gus TV Show. The Spaulding School Class of 1938 held its 40th reunion. The town faced a trash pick-up problem with the contractor announcing no more pick ups starting the first of the year. Vandals struck again, taking apart a portion of the Common fence.

December - Martin Morrissey was appointed Dog Officer. Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Eyles celebrated their 25th anniversary. At last, the new middle school opened.

1979

January - Town Accountant Velma Smith was honored by selectmen and former selectmen as she retired after 23 years. David McKinley started renovating 205 Main Street, the former site of Townsend Pizza and Cooper's Keg, as a mall to house restaurants and stores. Selectmen negotiated with Foster Insurance to avoid losing liability and workman's compensation coverage over an \$11,000 unpaid bill. Highway Superintendent Ray Bolden sought \$1.5 million to repair three roads.

February - Former Police Chief Donald Morse died at age 62 in Margate, Florida. Selectman Ronald Rajaniemi commended the fire department and Explorers for their work in cleaning up after a major snowstorm. Five local men were charged with sexually assaulting a Townsend man. A crack in the earth split the Brookline Street property owned by Leo and Beverly Bergeron. An Alternative Learning School proposed for NMRS met opposition. Town Moderator Auguste Fortin resigned after nine years. John Ogasapian announced his candidacy for NMRS School Committee. The women's group, "Open Door," was formed.

March - The new Hawthorne Brook Middle School was dedicated. Police Sgt. William

May saved the life of eight month-old Becky Lynn Barrett with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Resident Jane Wornham complained to selectmen about cemetery vandalism. The School Committee voted not to reappoint NMHS principal James McKelvey for the next school year. Carl and Faith Lasko returned from living and working in Tehran, Iran where they saw violence and political unrest.

April - A crowd of students and parents protested budget cuts at a School Committee meeting. Voters chose Steve Dunbar to succeed Rajaniemi as selectman over Dennis Brailey, Gene Dilda, and Irving Clark. Edwin West was voted in as Town Moderator. Town Meeting passed the Fiscal Year 1980 budget and joined Nashoba Tech. Finance Committee member Blair Arsenault opposed a \$40,000 article to repair Town Hall's oil burner, calling the hall "inadequate," and asking about "forgotten plans to construct a municipal complex." Fire destroyed Mr. and Mrs. John Coffey's barn on North End Road. Families from St. John's Catholic Church, the United Methodist Church, and Townsend Congregational Church worked together to hold an Easter dinner for 78 senior citizens.

May - Vincent Franco of Chelsea High School was selected as the new NMHS principal. The Planning Board started Routes 13 and 119 were the only legally accepted roads in town. Dog Officer Martin Morrissey asked for funds for kennels and a tranquilizer gun to quell a pack of stray dogs. Local and state authorities searched the area for Arthur "Scottie" MacDonald, missing from a nursing home on Old City Road for over a week. Town Meeting voted to join Nashoba Tech, and rejected a \$28,000 addition to the seven year-old highway garage and a \$50,000 maintenance building. The Fessenden family archives became the property of the Townsend Historical Society.

June - A consultant testing town water for bacteria asked the town to test for heavy metals. The NMHS class of 1979 graduated. Morrissey resigned as dog officer over lack of equipment. Former resident Edwin P. Bell, 81, was indicted for murdering his sister Mary E. Bell with an ax. Hawthorne Brook Middle School held its first annual Spring Arts Festival. The School Committee established the Michael J. Martin Memorial Fund to benefit the pre-school language program that readied Michael to attend kindergarten before he was killed in a car accident. Townsend gas stations said they were hurting from the gas shortage.

July - School Committee member William Goodwin called for an audit of books after a \$180,000 discrepancy in the building committee account was found. Selectman Steve Dunbar announced he would meet with state officials on setting up a mosquito control program in response to residents' complaints.

August - State testing showed Townsend wells were not affected by contamination in nearby Hickory Hills wells in Lunenburg. Richard Kangas was named the first Townsend member of Nashoba Tech School Committee. The NMRS audit resolved budget the discrepancy, which was found to be an accounting error. The Townsend Arts Association was formed. A citizen's group opposed to the new landfill, the Commission for Watershed Preservation, formed.

September - Charles Buso, heading residents against the new landfill, called it an "environmental time bomb."

Board of Health Chairman Ken Connors defended the choice of the landfill's site on Greenville Road. The *Times-Free Press* began a serialized run of Richard N. Smith's book on the Fessenden family, "A Village Hooped in Steel." Edwin Bell pleaded guilty to murdering his sister with an ax in July 1977.

October - The new landfill opened, but was closed after a week due to runoff problems. Town officials known as the "Townsend 41" were exonerated by a judge of charges of the deprivation of civil rights of three contracting firms. Evans Clothing opened a store next to P & C supermarket. Hawthorne Brook Middle School unveiled a painting commissioned in memory of student Sean Coffey, killed by a car earlier in 1979.

November - The Board of Health re-opened the landfill after resolving leakage problems. Sixty residents turned out at a selectmen's meeting to support the new Townsend Restaurant on Main Street after noise complaints were received. Town Meeting rejected rezoning Main Street for Aubuchon Hardware. The Board of Health and Conservation Commission met with selectmen to prompt a waste disposal study.

December - Buso questioned selectmen on landfill supervision and spending. The School Committee told the Finance Committee a six to eight percent increase in the next year would be needed to maintain services. Funding the new Nashoba Tech addition will cost Townsend \$312,000.

1980

January - The Townsend Restaurant was gutted by fire despite the all-night efforts of firefighters. Former Selectman and Town Moderator Arthur Verney died at age 81. Westside Package Store was robbed. Police Chief Erving Marshall declared Townsend would not allow right turns on red, despite the change in state law.

February - Selectman Jane Jackson announced she would run for re-election. The Planning Board met with residents on industrial and commercial districts. The Finance Committee called for a four percent cap on increases in departmental budgets.

March - The lack of snow aided residents in their search for the missing Kathleen Kinner, 6, who was eventually found unharmed in a wooded area after wandering away from her parents' home on Reagan Road. The NMRS budget for 1981-82 was certified at \$8,792,046. The Townsend Congregational Church's efforts to bring a Vietnamese family, the Trans, to Townsend were successful. The controversy between the Townsend Rod and Gun Club and Tamarack Lane residents began over flooding created on the road.

April - Police Sgt. William May was promoted to Acting Police Chief after Erving Marshall retired due to a heart attack. Members of the Townsend Rod and Gun Club defended themselves from charges they called false that they constructed a "dam" that caused flooding on Tamarack Lane. Selectman Jane Jackson and Town Moderator Ed West were re-elected. Fundraising for the town's 250th birthday celebration began with a flea market at the Townsend VFW.

May - The Annual Town Meeting considered 60 articles over four sessions, including the approval of a plan to revamp the town communications system. Former firefighter "Spud" Welch, 73, died, and was honored with a fireman's funeral. The Townsend Congregational Church held its annual Earth Day road

race.

June - The NMHS class of 1980 graduated. Angela Worley was the first graduate of the First Baptist Christian School since it began offering a high school program. Assistant Fire Chief Roy Shepherd retired. Lizzie Omqvist, 97, received the Boston Post Cane Award as the oldest resident of Townsend from Selectmen Jane Jackson, Steve Dunbar, and Robert Struthers.

July - Townsend Pizza was destroyed by fire at its new site on Main Street, down from the now-destroyed Townsend Restaurant in the second major fire on Main Street of the year. State Representative Bruce Wetherbee met with selectmen to explain local aid cuts by the state.

August - David McKinley, Edward McKinley, and Thomas Schulze were arrested on charges they burned David McKinley's Townsend Restaurant. The Board of Assessors awarded a \$60,000 contract for property revaluation to a Wilmington firm. Fisher Junior College announced a branch of the school would be opened at NMHS.

September - John Campana was named the new NMHS assistant principal. A report reveals Townsend's population grew 68 percent over the 10 years preceding. Donna Miller was appointed Communications Supervisor for the new communications center at the police station after being alarm operator at her home for many years. The newly reconstituted Townsend Jaycees held their first meeting. The Methodist Church held its annual fall arts festival on Townsend Common.

October - The state attorney general filed suit against developer Robert McLaren for violating the state Wetlands Protection Act, a state Department of Environmental Quality Engineering work order, and a Conservation Commission order of conditions in connection with the Tamarack Lane flooding dispute, removing suspicion from the Townsend Rod and Gun Club. Townsend Pizza re-opened after completing repairs and renovations from its July fire. The tax rate was increased eight dollars to \$41 per \$1,000 valuation. Olive Capen was the first senior citizen passenger served by the new Road Runner transportation program.

November - Almost 3,000 voters turned out to help elect Ronald Reagan to his first term as president over incumbent Jimmy Carter, and the town voted in favor of Proposition 2½, a limit on state property taxes. The town created its own ambulance service, appointing Louise Goyette as director. The North Middlesex Patriots defeated Lunenburg High School at the annual Thanksgiving football game, 20-16. Congregational Church members prepared and served a Thanksgiving meal to senior citizens and other residents.

December - Proposition 2½ meant town departments and school district would have to cut their budgets 15 percent. The Rod and Gun Club told selectmen a temporary drainage pipe would be put on Tamarack Lane until a permanent solution was found to the flooding. The body of Arthur "Scottie" MacDonald, missing since 1979 from a nursing home, was found in the woods 300 yards off Old City Road. Charges of arson against David and Edward McKinley and Thomas Schulze were due to be dismissed in connection with the burning of the Townsend Restaurant. Residents at a Special Town Meeting agreed to pay legal fees of the "Townsend 41." The Methodist Church and Townsend VFW held the annual tree lighting on Townsend Common.

1981

January - The Tamarack Lane flooding dispute continued, with no permanent solution near. Due to title problems, the high bidder from the Fernald House auction in 1980 dropped out. The Board of Health enacted stiffer regulations for landfill usage. Bates Corporation began steps to rid its site of sludge and improve waste disposal. Hawthorne Brook Principal Muriel Mozzi resigned effective June 30, while NMHS Principal Vincent Franco's future was uncertain. Residents were urged to conserve home heating fuel due to critically low area supplies.

February - Due to Proposition 2½, 105 positions in the school district were cut. Citizens for Better Government formed to watch town government and represent residents. Police Chief Erving Marshall was honored with a retirement party, and Acting Chief

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'80's

Continued from page 44

Gokey died as a result of impact injuries to his neck while intoxicated with cocaine. Townsend resident Cathy Shaughnessy, 23, won a bronze medal at the 1985 International Winter Olympics in Park City, Utah.

April - Samuel Thorpe was elected to fill Steve Dunbar's seat on the Board of Selectmen. Elwin Swicker retired from the Board of Assessors after 11 consecutive terms, and received a proclamation from the Board of Selectmen in recognition of his service to the town. Town Meeting voters approved a motion to pursue federal funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for elderly housing in Howard Park. Residents opposed to the housing formed Citizens to Save Howard Park, and filed suit against the town to cease plans to site the housing in the park. Eight NMRHS students and three chaperones travelled to the Soviet Union for 10 days, visiting Moscow, Leningrad, and Copenhagen, Denmark. The Townsend Historical Society began the restoration of the Reed Homestead in Townsend Harbor made possible by a successful fundraising campaign and a grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

May - State Rep. Augusta Hornblower welcomed the Hawthorne Brook Middle School Band on their trip to the State House for a noontime concert. The first phase of renovations on the Reed Homestead were completed ahead of schedule. The NMRHS class of 1985 graduated.

June - A homemade bomb was thrown through an upstairs bedroom window at The Way Home, a born-again Christian community at 146 Main Street. Police Chief William May stated the bomb, which did not detonate on impact, would have killed anyone in the room if it had exploded. The incident touched off an investigation by local, state, and federal authorities that continued through the end of 1985.

July - Selectman James Somerville resigned for personal reasons. Townsend Common served as the set of the television series, "The Teller and the Tale" starring Sally Struthers of "All in the Family" fame.

August - Daniel A. Cabral began his tenure as North Middlesex Regional Superintendent of Schools, replacing Edmund Donlan, who held the position since 1977. Hawthorne Brook student Scott Souza, 12, headed to Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama after qualifying for the program on the strength of teacher recommendations and principal and his aptitude in science and math. Souza's studies were sponsored by the Xerox Corporation. Hector Bedard III landed the big one - an over 300-pound shark - in the waters off Newburyport.

September - State Trooper James Burson of Timberlee Park was critically injured while directing traffic away from an accident scene on Route 495 in Lawrence. Nashoba Cable representatives told selectmen Townsend could be cable-ready by mid-1986.

October - Andrea Wood was chosen in a special election to replace James Somerville on the Board of Selectmen.

November - Residents rallied in opposition to Benjamin's Motel, under construction on Main Street, stating it was an apartment house disguised as a motel. Selectmen stated Townsend would have a 40 percent risk of losing the \$2.8 million HUD grant for elderly housing in Howard Park if citizens opposed it in court.

December - The NMRS School Committee decided to form a School District Building Committee to examine school space needs in the district, with five



Bullwinkle?...Lt. Greg Shepherd "horns in" on a fire at West Meadow Road (Marabelle photo)

members to come from Townsend. Selectmen voted to support the Board of Fire Engineers plan to hire a full-time fire chief by July 1, 1986. Nashoba Associated Boards of Health granted Gary Lorden a motel operator's license for Benjamin's Motel. Selectmen and Citizens to Save Howard Park readied for a court hearing in Middlesex County Superior Court over plans for HUD-funded elderly housing in the park.

January - The School Committee announced it wanted a \$13 million budget for 1986-87. NMRHS football coach Sandy Ruggles was named Wachusett League coach of the year. Selectmen Samuel Thorpe and Andrea Wood voted over Richard Najjar to withdraw support for a full-time fire chief - and changed their minds the following week. The Planning Board hired a consultant to help re-write bylaws. A Middlesex Superior Court judge ruled against siting elderly housing in Howard Park, and Housing Authority members proposed building it on the Atwood property on Dudley Road. Funeral Director Terrence J. "Ted" Anderson, 58, was killed while vacationing in Florida.

February - A small hydroelectric plant was proposed for the Squannacook River in West Townsend. Special Town Meeting voters transferred seven acres of the town-owned Atwood property to the Housing Authority for elderly housing, and voted to spend \$43,580 for legal fees in the police brutality suit pending against the town. Victory Supermarket announced plans to open a store at the planned Harbor Village Mall. State Sen. Mary Padula told selectmen the town would only receive \$39,000 in state funds in FY 1987.

March - A resident of Benjamin's Motel complained the establishment was not run like a motel, resulting in an investigation by building, fire, and health inspectors. Dorothy King and Vera Swicker were honored for over 15 years of service to the town Cemetery Commission.

Teachers sought minimum annual salaries of \$18,000. Highway Superintendent Philip Bartlett told selectmen his department was \$10,000 to \$15,000 in the red. The Historic District Commission denied permission for John and Barbara Delaney to construct a hydroelectric plant on the Squannacook River. Selectmen held an open hearing on the request of Police Sgt. Walter Beese, an 18-year veteran, on his psychological fitness for duty. The grand opening of the new Ayer headquarters of the *Times Free Press* was held.

April - Selectmen said they would support Sgt. Walter Beese in his efforts to gain disability retirement.

May - Town Meeting voted in favor of raising teacher salaries, and approved siting the Public Safety Complex at 205 Main Street, rejecting a Turnpike Road site. Voters also rejected a wetlands protection bylaw, and approved \$5,500 for library repairs and tighter regulations for earth removal. An armed robbery at the Old Brick Store in West Townsend was under investigation, and police were looking for four Townsend youths in connection with car windows broken at Hawthorne Brook Middle School in April.

June - William Cadogan was selected to replace Planning Board member Michael Therrien, who moved out of town. The NMRHS Class of 1986 graduated. Spaulding Memorial School ranked in the top 10 statewide in the Multiple Sclerosis Read-a-Thon. With the new full-time fire chief, the 111-year history of the Board of Fire Engineers was set to end on July 1.

July - Donald Hurme was appointed as Townsend's first full-time fire chief, replacing William Greenough, who did the job part-time for 20 years. Michael Gallant was hired as building inspector. The Board of Health voted for the first time to allow a septic system to be built in an aquifer recharge zone, for the Rollo home on Adams Road. Samuel and Marjorie Briguglio, who sold the land to the Rollos, asked selectmen to remove Elizabeth Parsons and

Susan Cadogan from the Conservation Commission over damage to the Briguglios' reputation. A Neighborhood Crime Watch program was instituted. Police officers Richard Vance, Barry Brown, and Erving Marshall, Jr. were promoted to sergeant. Travis Rixford received high honors in Conservation Information Contest at the graduation ceremonies of the Massachusetts Junior Conservation Camp summer program. Winslow Homer House, the former Elsa Williams School for Needlecraft in West Townsend, was gutted by fire.

August - Selectmen ruled against removing Conservation Commission members Elizabeth Parsons and Susan Cadogan, but concluded town officials must make clear when they were acting officially or as individuals. Superintendent of Schools Daniel Cabral said more school space would be needed to meet growing enrollment. Townsend farmers contributed hay to feed cattle in drought-stricken North Carolina. Construction of the Harbor Village Mall was underway on Route 119. Selectmen approved purchasing an eight year-old Wang computer system for the town. Rick Johnson, 20, won a gold medal in the Bay State Games Open Air Rifle Championship.

September - Former Fire Chief William Greenough and Deputy Fire Chief Skip Tumber were honored for their service to the town. The Planning Board began work on a new Master Plan for the town. One adult male and three male juveniles were arrested for breaking and entering two homes on Old Battery Road.

October - Police were investigating an attempted abduction of two girls, ages five and 10, on Bayberry Hill Road. A consultant recommended Townsend construct another elementary school. An Open Space preservation plan was being considered in the Townsend Master Plan process. Louis and Lonna Thiem opened their Village Books store at the new Harbor Village Mall. Charles "Dan" Gould, a former member of the Board of Fire Engineers who aided in the installation of Townsend's first fire alarm system, died at age 83. WNBC traffic helicopter pilot, William Pate of Townsend, was seriously injured when his helicopter crashed in New York City. Special Town Meeting voted to borrow \$1.3 million to extend the town water system.

November - Kristy McDonald, 10, was awarded a large sum of money by Police Chief William May after a year passed from the date she found it on her school bus and turned it into police and the funds remained unclaimed. Three families were left homeless by a fire that did \$60,000 to \$80,000 in damage to a building with three apartments and a flower shop in Townsend Center. Special Town Meeting approved \$32,116 for trash pick-up, \$12,500 for a full audit of Fiscal Year 1986, and over \$15,000 in additional line item transfers. Parents opposed to mandatory health education went before the School Committee, who maintained its support of the program.

December - Harbor Pond was undergoing water quality tests and methods to clean it and the watershed up were discussed by selectmen and engineers from Whitman-Howard. Paul Lestage, a former member of the Planning Board, Board of Health, and Auxiliary Police, died at 65. Local businesses formed the Townsend Business Association. Lifelong Townsend resident George Peabody died at age 96. A Pepperell hostage standoff on Lawrence Street resulted in the arrest of a 16 year-old male from Townsend, who was charged with kidnapping, armed assault, larceny, breaking and entering, and other related charges. While Pepperell police did not reveal the juvenile's name at the time of his arrest, events in 1987 led to the

disclosure that it was Daniel LaPlante. A 13 year-old Townsend youth was arrested at Hawthorne Brook Middle School on charges of assault and battery and possession of a knife. Timothy Hay was selected to attend the National 4-H Congress in Washington, D.C.

1987
January - A Special Town Meeting was saved when 18 year-old Tim Hay, attending his first Town Meeting as a registered voter, provided the 100th voter needed to meet a quorum to conduct business.

February - Former Townsend resident Geoffrey Alan Ward received eight life sentences plus 140 years in prison in Virginia after confessing to crimes including murder, rape, and assault. NMRS Superintendent Daniel Cabral met with parents to discuss plans to resolve overcrowding in the district's schools.

March - Victory Supermarket opened at the Harbor Village Shopping Mall on Main Street.

April - Flood waters ravaged Townsend, with roads underwater and impassable. Town officials were summoned to an emergency meeting on damage, as the Coopers in Townsend Harbor was threatened by high waters. Gene Dilda defeated John Wolons for the Board of Selectmen.

May - Five articles passed a Special Town Meeting that called for \$31 million for the construction of two new elementary schools and renovation of existing building space in the NMRS district.

June - The ground breaking for a \$2.8 million, 50-unit low income elderly and handicapped housing development on Dudley Road was announced. The NMRHS class of 1987 graduated.

July - The two-year court battle over the use of Howard Park for elderly housing ended with a Middlesex Superior Court judge's decision that it must forever remain open and a public park.

August - Police Chief William May and his wife, Linda won \$15,000 in a North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce raffle.

September - The NMRS district ended school bus service by the Jefferson Bus Company after drivers were found to be improperly licensed and equipment proved faulty.

October - The NMRS School Building Committee recommended a new elementary school be built as the first stage of \$31 million in construction and renovation, and once emptied of students, Spaulding Elementary School be repaired.

November - The man who ran down and killed Ted Anderson in a drunk-driving accident in Florida was convicted. The fire chief, building inspector, and superintendent of schools came to an agreement over alleged fire code violations at Spaulding Elementary School. A dispute over the number of articles on a Special Town Meeting warrant was laid aside when the meeting was postponed due to an error in the posted notice of the Town Meeting.

December - Townsend was rocked by the tragic triple-murder of Priscilla Gustafson and her two children, Andrew, 5, and Abigail, 7 in their Saunders Road home in West Townsend. Police issued a warrant for the arrest of 19 year-old Daniel LaPlante in connection with the murders, resulting in the largest manhunt in Massachusetts since 1971 after police tracked LaPlante through Pepperell, finally apprehending him in a dumpster in Ayer. Middlesex County District Attorney Scott Harshbarger's office was still seeking an indictment of LaPlante on charges of murder as 1987 drew to a close.

1988
January - The Lorden family announced plans to seek ZBA permission to build affordable housing. The ZBA reviewed

James Craven's variance request for a house lot adjacent to land donated to the town for a ballfield. Following weeks of observation at Bridgewater State Hospital, Daniel LaPlante, accused of murdering Priscilla Gustafson and her two children in 1987, was judged competent to stand trial, with the courts ordering body hair samples taken to compare with evidence. LaPlante was arraigned in Lowell Superior Court. Townsend businesses met with school officials to forge a partnership for community and business involvement in education. Townsend's assessment to Nashoba Tech was upped 21 percent to \$232,000 due to greater enrollment from the town.

February - Townsend businessman Ernest Koch and Andrew Gustafson's Days Inn Conference Center in Gardner nearing completion. Cuts in state funding meant that Townsend's plans for an elementary school and school renovations would likely be shelved. The School Committee presented a \$15,414,555 proposed school budget for 1988-89, up 22 percent, with salaries accounting for 70 percent of the budget.

March - Ex-Spaulling School Cafeteria Manager Lucy Girard mullied suing the school district after she was exonerated for larceny and filing false reports. New lawyers were appointed for Daniel LaPlante, awaiting trial on three murder charges, after his attorneys withdrew over a potential conflict of interest. His trial was set for October 6, 1988. Former selectman Harold Dik died at age 80. Townsend, Pepperell, and Ashby called for a \$550,000 reduction in the 1988-89 school budget. A 15 year-old Townsend youth was arrested in connection with a February sniper incident on South Row Road. State and local police were investigating the death of former Townsend resident August Bertram, 22, which occurred while he was playing basketball at Hawthorne Brook. Zachary Zufelt, 20, was arrested in connection with an illegal bar on Clement Road.

April - Police would not acknowledge reports that a member of Daniel LaPlante's family turned over a 22-caliber Ruger automatic gun, believed to have been used in the shooting death of Priscilla Gustafson, found on the LaPlante property. School Committee members downed a plan for \$110,000 in cuts to the school budget, and the state released funds for the construction of a new Townsend elementary school. Richard Hibbot of Illinois was sentenced to 15 years in prison for the 1986 drunk driving accident in Florida that killed Townsend resident Terrence "Ted" Anderson. Robert Remelius was elected selectman over Charles Buso, Edwin West was re-elected Town Moderator, Susan Clark elected to the School Committee, and Monica Westerback won a Board of Health seat over Carolyn Sellars and Susan Cadogan. Voters rejected a Proposition 2½ override to fund a new police communications center, but Town Meeting approved constructing the building, requiring a future debt exclusion vote.

May - Robert J. Boncore, 34, was arrested in North Carolina for the 1985 murder of Edward Gokey of Lunenburg at Pearl Hill State Park in Townsend, believed to be over a \$700 cocaine debt. Former NMRHS Librarian Laura Connolly died at age 75. An appreciation dinner was held for school teachers and personnel. Hawthorne Brook students remembered POW/MIA's with a flag in their honor donated by the VFW Ladies Auxiliary 6538. The Planning Board considered plans for Pheasant Ridge, a 20-lot subdivision off Route 13. Former Townsend resident Christopher Pindell was killed in a freak accident at an Ossing, New York horse farm when a startled horse caused a rope to become tangled

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1932 - 1992

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1956 - 1992

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The '80's

Continued from page 45

around Pindell's neck, dragging him 100 feet. The Ruger pistol believed used by Daniel LaPlante in the murder of Priscilla Gustafson found to have been stolen from his neighbors on Elm Street West, the Pindell family. William English of Fitchburg was arrested on charges of child abuse and rape in Townsend. In a separate incident, Richard Fuller, 44, of Townsend was arraigned in Ayer District Court on charges of forcible rape. West Townsend mail carrier Robert Sundstrom was honored for 30 years of service.

June - Chemlawn caused a hazardous chemical spill in Timberlee Park, with the company and state environmental officials disagreeing on the amount, which ranged from 50 to 350 gallons. The NMRHS Class of 1988 graduated. Merchants National Bank held their Townsend branch grand opening. Three letters written by triple-murder suspect Daniel LaPlante to Larry Brockelbank stating police would never find the gun were made public during a pre-trial hearing in Lowell Superior Court. Voters approved a \$1.5 million debt exclusion to fund building a police communications center. The Townsend Military Band began its 150th season of concerts on Townsend Common. Harbor Village Mall celebrated its first anniversary. Water Commissioners awarded a \$1 million contract for water mains and hydrants to Chelmsford and Brockton firms. Peter Beauregard, 16, of Elm Street, was killed in a motorcycle accident on Dudley Road. Ann Woods of Townsend was named American Red Cross Volunteer of the Month. Former Water Commissioner and Finance Committee member Harold Corkum died at age 69. Special Town Meeting voters gave the thumbs-up to borrow or transfer \$1.25 million to build a new elementary school.

July - The School Committee approved emergency asbestos removal from Spaulding Memorial School. Former Finance Committee, American Legion and VFW member William Sims died at age 69. A

Lowell Superior Court judge ordered blood, saliva, and handwriting samples be taken from triple-murder suspect Daniel LaPlante. The Board of Health rejected a septic variance for the Townsend elementary school project. Planning Board members William Kao and David Mathieu and Board of Health member Samuel Briguglio resigned. The School Committee was waiting for a special permit to start the new elementary school.

August - Townsend Ambulance Service held a public awareness drive. School Committee members rejected a 225-signature petition calling for the recall of the vote to build the Townsend elementary school. The Planning Board approved Pheasant Ridge subdivision, and reviewed the site plan for the new police headquarters/communications center. Bruce Rossbach won the best individual exhibit award at the 32nd Westford 4-H Fair.

September - Hawthorne Brook principal James McCormick did double-duty as principal of Varnum Brook Middle School in Pepperell after the reassignment of Ben Augello due to an investigation by the District Attorney's office regarding student punishment and confidentiality. Augello was later cleared of the charges. Former School Committee member Sue Lisio criticized McCormick being in the post. Ground was broken on Dudley Road for Atwood Acres, affordable elderly housing. School district population was up 134 students. Daniel LaPlante's mother, Elaine Moore identified a shirt found between the Gustafson's and their home in West Townsend, as her husband's. LaPlante's lawyer sought to suppress letters LaPlante wrote to police informant Larry Brockelbank from being used as evidence, which the judge agreed to do. The Townsend Congregational Church offered support for residents during trial, set for October 3.

October - Daniel LaPlante's trial began after a jury was selected in Springfield and sequestered in Lowell due to pre-



Every vote counts...Townsend Patrolman Cheryl Poirier and Warden Catherine Wilson unlock the ballot box after an election. (Capers photo)

trial media attention. LaPlante was charged with the shooting death of Priscilla Gustafson and drowning her two children, Abigail, 7, and William, 3 in separate bathtubs at their Saunders Road home. Testimony during the trial included Andrew Gustafson's account of how he came home from work on December 1, 1987 to find his family murdered. Among the 49 witnesses was LaPlante's friend, Michael Polowski, who testified to selling him 20 bullets the week before Priscilla Gustafson was killed. LaPlante was found guilty of first degree murder later in the month, and sentenced to three consecutive life sentences. After the verdict, the judge released four letters believed written by LaPlante to informant Larry Brockelbank admitting to the murders. Developer Roger Kane unveiled plans to build a golf course on a 120-acre site between Scales Lane and Blood Road.

November - William Kao and his partners in the Harbor Village Mall pondered suing First Service Bank if they refused to honor a loan to the project after the bank's leadership changed hands. Twenty residents visited developer Roger Kane's Stow Acres Country Club for a look at what could come in Townsend. A building permit for the new Townsend elementary school was granted. Residents were warned not to

swim in Townsend's Harbor Pond due to high bacteria levels. The Solid Waste Advisory Committee held a public forum to update residents on landfill conditions.

December - NMRHS students Stephen Ceruti and Shelly Williams, both of Townsend, were selected to attend George Bush's presidential inauguration by the Congressional Youth Leadership Council. Daniel LaPlante, serving three consecutive life sentences, was being held in protective custody at the medium-security Concord State Prison away from the general prison population for his own protection. Lifelong Townsend resident Alice Dumas died at age 71.

1989

January - Andrew Gustafson, whose wife, Priscilla and two children, Abigail and William were murdered in 1987 by Daniel LaPlante, married local realtor Carole Seaver on New Year's Day. Construction continued on the Townsend elementary school. The School Committee banned smoking in the schools except in designated areas. The proposed 1989-90 NMRHS budget presented by principal Ralph Olsen showed a six percent increase, totalling just over \$5 million. Hawthorne Brook Principal James McCormick said budget cuts at his school threatened the quality of education, which was facing accreditation.

February - School budget debates continued, with a proposal for a 15-student minimum class size, which NMRHS Principal Ralph Olsen opposed because it would reduce the number of accelerated or advanced high school classes, which had low class sizes. Olsen proposed an athletic user fee to raise money to maintain school sports. School Committee certified the budget at \$16,938,382, up 11 percent from the previous year.

March - The Finance Committees of Townsend, Ashby, and Pepperell held an emergency meeting to discuss how to meet increased assessments from the school district, which they opposed. Renovations of Spaulding Memorial School were complicated by asbestos. Hart Free Library celebrated its 60th anniversary. Two years of debate by town boards over Robert Raffi's King Arthur Estates, proposed for Wallace Hill Road, continued. Studies showed nitrate levels were up in town water. Ground was broken for the new police/communications complex. With 73 teaching positions in jeopardy, the School Committee joined a lawsuit against the state over education requirements and lagging funding.

April - First Service Bank was shut down by the Federal Depositors Insurance Corp. (FDIC), and taken over by Peoples Bank. Selectmen changed the name of Cross Street in West Townsend to Linden Street and Old Turnpike Road was officially renamed Greenville Road, as it was popularly called. Local students were in the finals of the state "Odyssey of the Mind" competition. The Finance Committee predicted a \$368,284 shortfall for Fiscal Year 1989. Blair Arsenault defeated incumbent Selectman Andrea Wood by a two to one margin, incumbent Board of Health member defeated Susan Cadogan, and in uncontested races, Francis Sherrin was elected to the School Committee, and Town Moderator Edwin West and Assessor Robert Struthers were re-elected.

May - The School Committee approved spending \$140,000 in reserve funds, in part for repairs to Spaulding Memorial School to keep it open. Steven Dunbar's Townsend Sand & Gravel received complaints by neighbor Samuel Thorpe over noise and

stray sand and rocks. Plaques in memoriam of NMRHS students Laurie Shea, Peter Beauregard, and Shawn Kinsman were dedicated. Executive Secretary Julie Stockwell resigned effective June 30. Plans for a new town charter failed due to lack of funds.

June - The NMRHS Class of 1989 graduated. The School Committee approved a "drug-free workplace" policy for employees. Erin Foods sought permission to continue permits for the construction of a Burger King restaurant next to Harbor Village Mall. The Finance Committee sought a piece of the school district's reserve fund. The Conservation Commission signed their final order of conditions for Roger Kane's Northern Spy Golf Course.

July - Selectmen interviewed executive secretary candidates, Steve Desy, Christopher Gaffney, and John Thrasher to replace Julie Stockwell. Townsend received a \$147,733 cut in state aid, down to \$417,357 for Fiscal Year 1990. Fessenden Field, the northwest corner of the land behind Spaulding Memorial School, was approved for a new playground. The Conservation Commission gave their okay to the Rollo brothers to build a septic system within 100 feet of wetlands on Adams Road.

August - September 1 was set by school officials for the 95 percent complete mark of the Townsend elementary school. Riddle, White, and Feldeisen were selected as Townsend's new town counsel, replacing Karen Hurvitz, only to have the firm resign due to controversy in another town. Volunteers were needed to restore Memorial Hall. Work on the Northern Spy Golf Course began. Townsend, Ashby, and Pepperell demanded \$600,000 be cut from the district school budget.

September - Squannacook Meadows experienced permitting problems. Developer William Kao said that future plans for Harbor Village Mall included a major department store. The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee presented a lean budget to the town at the Special Town Meeting and cut five percent across the board. Selectman Gene Dilda changed his position and supported new police officers for the town. October - Selectmen approved a rescue truck, heard proposals for expanded regional county services and Town Clerk Marilyn MacEachern again notified the board that the roof of Memorial Hall was leaking. The tax rate went up 22 percent to \$11.90. A proposed gravel pit in Brookline, New Hampshire threatened Townsend with an access road. Police Chief William May, local business people and the Board of Selectmen discussed removing burglar alarms from the communications center. May informed the Board of Selectmen that his department was understaffed due to budget cuts and resignations. A new police/communications building was slated to open in December. The Planning Board released funds for Pheasant Ridge road. The Conservation Commission reviewed erosion problems from Northern Spy Golf Course. Atwood Acres, residence for the elderly and handicapped, held its grand opening. Debora Woollacott was named Townsend Branch Manager for Merchants National Bank.

November - The Planning Board delayed the move of Luella's Country Candies to West Townsend because of zoning problems and accepted the covenant for Squannacook Meadows. The Finance Committee discussed the 1990-91 budget without a quorum present. Later in the month, the Committee asked town departments to submit level funded budgets. Northern Spy was granted a liquor license. Louis Lorden proposed developing more affordable housing in town. Construction began on the Townsend Playground. The Zoning Board reviewed Stephen Dunbar's gravel operation to determine whether an extension of use occurred. The Conservation Commission expressed concern over the construction of a house on Sam Briguglio's property because the land was environmentally sensitive. The Board of Health approved septic system and sewage disposal plans for the property.

December - State Rep. Chester Suhoski and State Sen. Mary Padula discussed state finances as they related to town finances with the Board of Selectmen. Police Chief William May expressed concern over the Finance Committee's request for a level funded budget. Town business alarms remained in the Communications Building. The Board of Health approved bypass of a waste water

facility for Squannacook Elementary School. The Conservation Commission ruled that beaver dams on Sam Briguglio's property were subject to protection. During hearings for King Arthur Estates, Developer Robert Raffi met with opposition from the the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board. The hearings were continued into January. The affordable housing project proposed by Louis Lorden was presented to the Zoning Board of Appeals and continued for two weeks. Burger King received an extension on its site plan review date. Townsend Ford gave away a Bill Elliot gas-powered Thunderbird mini car for Christmas.

1990

January - NMRS School Committee members began a painful budget process for the 1990-91 school year, with NMRHS principal Ralph Olsen calling it the dismantling of public education. The Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals looked carefully at a 60-unit multi-family housing project proposed for Turnpike Road by Mickey and Gary Lorden. Conservation Commission members reviewed Sam Briguglio's notice of intent to construct a bridge on his Meadow Road property and Brian Rollo's plans to build a house on Adams Road within a wetlands buffer zone. The Conservation Commission ultimately rejected Rollo's plans. A car crash on Ash Street killed Carl Glennon, 54, of Acton. P.J. Keating reapplied for a permit to operate a gravel pit on Tyler Road.

February - Squannacook Elementary School was dedicated to the children and citizens of Townsend. Peter and Joan Beauregard filed suit against the town and four police officers in connection with the motorcycle accident death of their son, Peter. Selectmen and the Historic District Commission mulled major traffic changes to Townsend Center. Selectman Blair Arsenault questioned plans by Nashoba Cable for a rate hike without town board input. Contractors for the landfill predicted it would be full by 1992, accelerating the need to recycle. Plans were discussed for a 3,600 square foot underground addition to the library. Conservation Commission Chairman Vincent Davulis resigned. Selectmen stated their opposition to a Proposition 2½ override.

March - The Planning Board denied a rotary for Townsend Center. The Townsend Finance Committee said the budget shortfall could be over \$1 million, and was united with Ashby and Pepperell in opposition to the NMRHS 1990-91 budget. Developer Robert Raffi threatened suit if the Planning Board turned down his King Arthur Estates on Wallace Hill Road. Gene Dilda withdrew from the race for selectman, leaving Frederick Darling unopposed.

April - The NMRHS School Committee agreed to cut the budget 13 percent. Thomas Hardy defeated Charles Vogel for School Committee. Tyler Road residents continued fighting the Keating Co. gravel pit permit request. Trash pick-up and the landfill were targeted for an override by town officials. The decision on Brian Rollo's Adams Road permit request was reversed, and King Arthur Estates cleared the Planning Board. Town Meeting rejected a \$150,000 request for a fire engine.

May - Over 80 NMRHS teachers were pink-slipped by the School Committee, and students picketed over cutbacks. NMRHS Director of Fine and Performing Arts James Wiltshire pleaded with the School Committee to maintain arts programs at all levels. Jane Jackson was selected Finance Committee Chairman. The Planning Board approved a new master plan. Floyd Truitt presented Townsend Emergency Services with a wood plaque he spent over 700 hours carving.

June - A second override for a school budget was defeated. Townsend Military Band Director George Talcott died at age 85, and the band played at his funeral. The speed limit on Route 13 was lowered to 45 m.p.h. from 50 m.p.h. Financial problems ceased construction of the Northern Spy Golf Course.

July - Controversy continued over the still pending school budget, including failed attempts at agreement by the School Committee and Board of Selectmen, court action by the School Committee, and a Special Town Meeting forced by a 400-signature citizens' petition. Spaulding

Continued on page 47

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The '90's

Continued from page 46

Elementary School stood empty for the first time since it was constructed 59 years ago, and planned renovations looked unlikely as it dropped on the state's funding priority list. The Zoning Board of Appeals denied the Keating gravel permit request.

August - Selectmen voted to withhold further school payments until the school system complied with Department of Revenue regulations. The School Committee's court case against the town began, with controversy arising over altered and missing School Committee meeting minutes. Townsend continued to operate without a Fiscal Year 1991 budget. Selectman Blair Arsenault was criticized for the appointment of Warren McFague over Ward Clark to the Conservation Commission. Keating appealed the ZBA's decision. Sunday liquor sales were approved. An Ashby man was beaten by four Townsend men after stopping to question why rocks were being thrown at his car.

September - A school budget carrying a five percent increase was narrowly approved by a Special Town Meeting, which meant severe cuts to town departments would be needed to meet the budget without an override. The Zoning Board of Appeals went head to head with Harbor Auto Body on the issue of businesses in residentially-zoned areas.

October - A Lowell Superior Court judge ruled the NMRS School Committee's presentation of a budget to Pepperell was legal, and town officials appealed. The Zoning Board of Appeals approved a special permit allowing Harbor Auto Body to move across Main Street. Selectmen voted to place an override on the November 6 ballot. Conservation Commission members Don Massucco and Linda Fasciani resigned in protest to selectmen's appointments to the commission. The town's Recycling Center opened.

November - Voters rejected the override attempt nearly two to one, leaving town officials to cut \$547,000 from the budget. Finance Committee members asked the School Committee to reduce the town's assessment, and the court ruled Townsend must pay its share of the five percent school budget increase. Townsend resident Richard Coit, 46, was killed in a bizarre attack on Main Street in Nashua, New Hampshire. Superintendent of Schools Daniel Cabral resigned to head the Somerset school system, and Mary Waight was appointed Acting Superintendent until a permanent successor was found. Hawthorne Brook Principal James McCormick was appointed Acting Superintendent of Budgets and Development. Eight years of work in district schools by Northeast Correctional work crews ended after unfavorable publicity. The Planning Board denied a permit extension for Burger King's proposed store across from NMRHS.

December - Special Town Meeting voters approved \$568,688 in budget cuts to town departments. School officials opposed allowing Channel 1 in schools. The School Committee began the superintendent search process, and agreed to reduce Townsend's assessment by \$103,754 with the resolution of the town's court appeal.

1991

January - Work continued on departmental efforts to reduce the budget by \$568,688, and department heads were asked to level-fund non-union wages for Fiscal Year 1992. Town Moderator Edwin West suggested future Town Meetings start with an announcement that all money articles exceeding Finance Committee recommendations be contingent on



Grillmeister...A Townsend Rod and Gun Club anniversary celebration with Buster Borneman manning the grill (Capers photo)

an override. The developer of the Pheasant Ridge subdivision and selectmen argued over the meaning of "substantially complete" and the acceptance of the subdivision's roads.

February - State Representatives Augusta Hornblower and Robert Hawke spoke to selectmen about state aid for Townsend, which was down 40 percent over four years, and officials discussed delaying the Annual Town Meeting until more certain figures on state aid for FY 1992 were available. As the landfill neared capacity, the Recycling Committee continued work to enlarge the recycling program in town beyond quarterly paper drives. Selectmen, Planning Board, and Historic Districts Commission members opposed state plans to modernize the intersection of Routes 119 and 13. William Baro, Jr. returned to Townsend after being injured in Operation Desert Storm.

March - Town and school officials began what would be months of frustration and waiting for state aid figures, facing rumors of a \$1 million cut in aid to schools. Without the loss in school funding, the FY 1992 deficit was already estimated at \$400,000. Budget cuts for FY 1992 were begun, with Memorial Day celebrations among the reductions. Despite the opposition of Selectman Blair Arsenault, plans to accept Pheasant Ridge subdivision roads as town roads moved ahead with the backing of Selectman Robert Remelius.

April - NMRS School Committee incumbent Charles Vogel came in third in the three-way race for his seat, with James Reid being chosen to succeed him. Montachusett Regional Planning Commission Director Mohammed Khan defended the \$1,500 membership fee to Townsend, admitting the town had not been included in the commission's work in two years, and promising more attention in the future. Selectmen and Finance Committee members sent a letter to the NMRS district objecting to a \$551,943 hike in Townsend's assessment, and Town Meeting voters rejected the assessment later in the month, and nixed a \$16,000 increase in funding for Nashoba Valley Technical High School. Town Meeting also agreed to make any financial articles over Finance Committee recommendations contingent on an override.

May - Pheasant Ridge subdivision roads met with selectmen's

approval, allowing them to be placed on the Town Meeting warrant, while Bayberry and Brooks Crossing roads were delayed. Property tax bills went out to residents reflecting higher tax rates. Police officers agreed to a one-year contract that called for no increase in wages for FY 1992 in an effort to help Townsend resolve financial problems.

June - Special Town Meeting voters passed the regional school budget contingent on a \$544,404 override. School officials spoke out in support of funding for education while town officials criticized the escalating district budget.

July - Months of fundraising paid off for the Fourth of July Committee with a successful holiday celebration. Special election voters rejected every override proposal, including \$544,404 for the school budget, and funding for the clean up of leachate seeping from the landfill, Memorial Day celebrations, and a new fire truck. NMRSD Superintendent James McCormick estimated Townsend's assessment would be reduced by \$300,000 due to state aid. Four teen vandals broke into Spaulding Memorial School, gutting the interior, breaking almost every pane of glass in the building, and ripping plumbing fixtures out of the wall.

August - The credibility of the Finance Committee was dealt a blow by Selectman Blair Arsenault's announcement that the FY 1992 budget was balanced despite the failed override attempt. Even with the \$280,000 reduction in the school assessment, officials were left wondering where the remaining \$280,000 increase over last year's assessment would come from, and was later partially solved by \$203,231 in state highway funding. Over \$800,000 was owed to the town in delinquent property taxes, compared with \$486,000 the year before. Hazardous waste dump sites in a number of locations, including Timberlee Park, 97 Main Street, and Bates Box were revealed.

September - The FY 1992 deficit was now down to \$27,724. Hillside Cemetery was the site of more vandalism by local children. Hundreds of fish in Roberts Pond were killed by the dumping of an unknown toxic substance into the waters. The new Volunteer Committee worked to match volunteers with town departments.

October - Selectmen challenged state environmental officials over their lack of action in forcing

the clean up of hazardous waste at 97 Main Street, and then later reducing its priority further for clean up. Landfill operators notified selectmen that leachate from the landfill was in violation of their state permit and that the state would eventually force compliance. The Board of Assessors' figures on new growth in Townsend delayed the balancing of the FY 1992 budget and the establishment of the tax rate, forcing the town to borrow short-term to meet cash needs.

November - Townsend residents continued their annual tradition of putting on a Thanksgiving dinner at the Townsend Congregational Church for those people with nowhere else to go. Timberlee Park vandalism shed light on the need for additional police patrols. Selectmen Frederick Darling and Andrea Wood agreed to accept responsibility for roads in Brooks Crossing before Town Meeting approval, including town maintenance and plowing of the roads.

December - The Fiscal Year 1993 deficit looked to be around \$218,231, and the Finance Committee and selectmen asked town departments to cut 10 percent of their budgets for FY 1993. Town Accountant Richard Choate predicted the 10 percent cut would not be enough to offset the \$218,231 deficit and an estimated \$200,000 cut in state highway aid. The Townsend Ecumenical Organization continued to collect food for over 75 families in need, facing double the demand as in the previous year, and relying more than ever on individual donations. The Townsend VFW Post 6538 and Ladies Auxiliary continued its holiday tradition of having Santa Claus visit Townsend children at home.

1992

January - Unknown trespassers cut through a massive beaver dam and drained a 50 acre beaver pond. Private contributions exceeding \$1,000 were offered as a reward for information leading to the arrest of those responsible for the dam's destruction. Pepperell builder Cyril Lunn denied stories implicating him with the destruction of the dam. Eyewitnesses identified the individual responsible for the vandalism of three more beaver dams in town, though the person's name was not released. The unidentified eyewitness later changed the account of the story and could not identify the culprit. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management announced its intent to log state owned land in Townsend despite the objections of the Board of Selectmen. The Conservation Commission was not as concerned about the state's plans to log. Townsend Board of Health member and Nashua River Water Association Director of Water Resources Carolyn A. Sellars was appointed to the Fort Devens Redevelopment Board by Gov. William F. Weld. The Board of Assessors received 120 overvaluation applications on property taxes due to the declining real estate market. Joint meetings between the Selectmen and Assessors were held to discuss implementation of the town's options in processing automobile excise tax bills. The Board of Selectmen reviewed Enhanced 911 emergency service for hidden costs. In response to an increase in cable television rates, Selectmen planned to meet with Town Counsel to define the terms of the cable contract. Following a public hearing, the selectmen voted to "lay out the ways" for roads at Brooks and Bayberry Crossings. Adam Normandin, a victim of a two car collision in November, was recovering beyond doctors' expectations. A benefit dance was held to raise funds to assist the family in meeting Adam's medical expenses.

February - Townsend land owner George Morey of Lexington admitted to investigators

from the Department of Environmental Protection during an inspection of his property that he destroyed two of the beaver dams. Town Treasurer Amy Collins requested approval to borrow \$1.2 million. Selectmen promised to review the request with Town Counsel. The automobile excise taxes issued by the Board of Assessors were mailed to residents without being updated. The Assessors and Selectmen continued to meet to discuss excise tax processing. The Board of Assessors also opened discussions to consider an interim adjustment in property assessments. The Board of Selectmen Chairman Blair Arsenault and Selectman Fred Darling suggested lowering the interest rate on unpaid real estate taxes. Statistics for calendar years 1990 and 1991 showed that crime increased in town while the service ability of the police department declined due to budget cuts. The Finance Committee recommended a 10 percent reduction in Police Chief William May's budget. Later in the month, the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen jointly recommended 10 percent budget cuts and a policy of level funded salaries. Finance Committee review of some proposed budgets showed few areas that could sustain additional cuts. Two Fire Department trucks failed tests for rated capacities. John Nikolow and Maureen Denig announced their candidacies for The North Middlesex Regional School Committee. Townsend awarded the contract for the Annual Town Report to Athol Press, Inc. at a bid price of \$1,612. The Board of Selectmen reviewed plans for a Main Street mini mall that would include a Dunkin' Donuts and two retail stores. Kathy Kenny was appointed as director of the Townsend Public Library.

March - Former Massachusetts Sen. Paul Tsongas won the presidential primary in Townsend, with 34 percent of the town's 4,410 registered voters casting their votes. The Department of Environmental Protection issued a Notice of Noncompliance to George Morey for destroying beaver dams on his Townsend property. Selectman Blair Arsenault told fire fighters to train

less for more cost efficient operations that the department could meet the recommended 10 percent budget cut. The Library Trustees told the Finance Committee that they could not meet the 10 percent budget cut recommended. The Board of Assessors began review of overvaluation applications. Among those applications was one from Board of Selectman Chairman Blair Arsenault. The deadline for the applications was January 13, but Arsenault's was delivered by Board of Assessors Chairman Robert Struthers on February 26. Arsenault's taxes on the property, due in January, had not been paid. Tax Collector Marjorie Kumpu told the Finance Committee that there were insufficient funds to mail the town's bills. The possibility of merging the Parks and Cemetery Commissions was discussed with the Board of Selectmen. Executive Secretary Robert Griffin made recommendations to the Board of Selectmen that would save the town a minimum of \$9,000 in car insurance fees. The Board of Selectmen discussed preventing the school district from proceeding with a previously approved building project and charging the school district for Spaulding Memorial School. The Board of Selectmen met with Richard Williams to discuss regional solid waste disposal options. Town Counsel June Riddle informed the Board of Selectmen that in instances when a taxpayer who owes taxes under one company name, but is owed payment by the town on materials delivered under another company name, payment by the town may not legally be withheld. The Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife announced its intent to purchase additional property in Townsend. Francis Sherrin announced his candidacy for reelection to the North Middlesex Regional School Committee. Adam Normandin continued to improve from the injuries sustained in the November car accident. Ten year old Nathan Marti was commended by Police Chief William May for turning into police money that he found last year. The money was never claimed and it was returned to Nathan.

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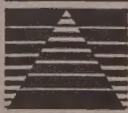
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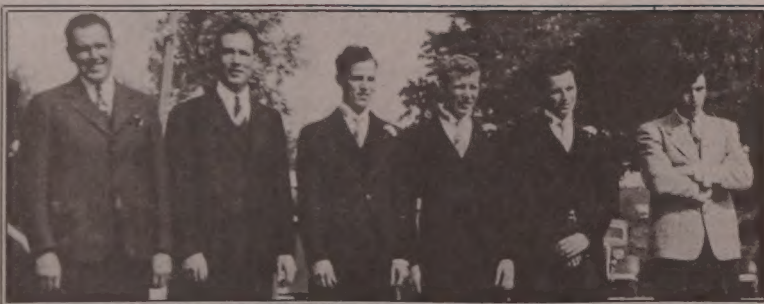
The Lordens' first metered oil truck.



The beginning of the fleet.

The 1950's to the 70's

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1980's and 90's

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and increased business*

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